

THE TIMES
Tomorrow

Does crime really pay? In Saturday tomorrow the winning entry in *The Times* / Veve Cluot Short Crime Story Competition. On the travel front: A motoring holiday in Scotland and life in the United Arab Emirates. In Values, a breakdown on how to get your possessions cleaned, dyed, and refurbished. Also included in the eight-page arts and leisure section published each Saturday with *The Times* are news and views of the coming week's events in the arts and the world of entertainment.

Referendum
to decide
on reforms

The South African Government's proposals for constitutional reform, involving three houses of parliament for whites, Coloureds and Asians, but not including Africans, were presented yesterday.

The Minister for Constitutional Development expects the proposals to be passed in the current session of the whites-only Parliament, but said that they would not become law until passed by a majority of white voters at a referendum.

Details, page 6

Reagan saved
on freeze vote

President Reagan was saved from another setback on the nuclear front by a Republican amendment which lessened the impact of the House of Representatives resolution for a mutual freeze.

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Oil venture

BP and a consortium led by Phillips Petroleum are to develop the Andrew oil field, which has estimated reserves of 140 million barrels, 120 miles from Aberdeen.

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Bank doubts

Lord Richardson, Governor of the Bank of England, questioned the wisdom of allowing building societies to compete directly with banks and insurance companies.

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Khyber trip

Princess Anne completed her visit to Pakistan yesterday by travelling up the Khyber Pass close to the Afghanistan border.

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Irish protest

The Irish Government has formally protested to Britain about criticism about Irish unity by Mr Michael Heseltine, Secretary of State for Defence.

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Jaguar roaring

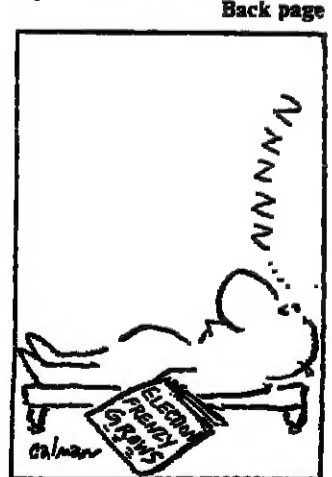
Jaguar Cars is considering the reintroduction of a night shift at its Coventry plant to cope with record sales. Production will reach an estimated 28,000 cars this year.

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A £1.9m suit

An anonymous New York collector paid £1,925,000 at Sotheby's for a suit of armour made about 1550 for King Henry II of France in a £4m sale of pieces from Hever Castle.

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Ken Livingstone's pantomime cow; Election fever: a vital weekend at Chequers; Heading for a fall at the summit. Spectrum: Fitting in to our ancestors. Friday Page: A man about the house. Obituary, page 12
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Tory initiative on
election may
be lost, MPs fear

By Julian Haviland, Political Editor

Conservative MPs, after a week of growing excitement at the prospect of a June general election, were by last night seriously concerned that the Prime Minister might have lost the initiative.

They believe that the assembly of senior advisers at Chequers on Sunday, and the fact that it is known, may make imperative an announcement by Mrs Margaret Thatcher early next week.

If so, and if her preference after full consideration is to go to the country in late June, then she is in danger of giving the Opposition parties six or seven weeks' notice of an election.

She has had strong advice from within the party that to give more than the four weeks' notice required by statute would particularly help the Liberals and Social Democrats, who can expect increased exposure to public view during a campaign.

It is now known that Mrs Thatcher received advice from some quarters earlier in the week to cancel the Chequers consultations so that this danger might be avoided, but she was not persuaded.

She takes the view that weekend meetings with senior ministers, which first took place regularly in the relaxed setting of Chequers during the Falklands war and have been repeated from time to time since, are specially valuable and she does not intend to be deprived of the chance of a first detailed consideration, in the

light of today's local election results, of the election options. Those in the party who a week ago were complaining that it was unwise of the Prime Minister to allow the local elections to be seen as the prologue to an announcement, now make the same complaint about Chequers.

The message of the past 48 hours, made on the Prime Minister's behalf, that no announcement of any kind should necessarily be looked for next week, has been delivered too late for Conservative backbenchers who last night dismissed the notion that silence could or should be kept.

The cast list for Chequers, meanwhile, has been enlarged to include not only Mr William Whitelaw, deputy leader of the party, Mr Cecil Parkinson, party chairman, and Sir Geoffrey Howe, Chancellor of the Exchequer, but also Mr John Biffen, leader of the Commons, Mr Michael Jopling, Chief Whip, and Mr Ian Gow, the Prime Minister's parliamentary private secretary, whose judgment she values highly. Others may also attend.

The evidence is that this gathering will help Mrs Thatcher to give serious formal consideration for the first time to the advisability of a June election. She has been seeking and receiving unsought informal advice for weeks.

The reason why no one so far has been able to detect her intentions is that up to last

night she had formed none. In the Commons yesterday she showed a weary contempt as the twice-weekly probing was tried. When Mr Michael Foot asked about a newspaper report that Mr Whitelaw had revealed the date as June 9, a report since denied, Mrs Thatcher said that his question did not merit a reply.

One rather more substantial straw was in the wind yesterday after Mr Edwin Meece, a senior member of President Reagan's staff, met the Prime Minister and received her absolute assurance that she will have talks with the President, and Williamsburg, Virginia, for the economic "summit" from May 28 to 30.

This intelligence intensified discussion at Westminster of the feasibility of an election on June 9, the earliest possible date and one that many Conservatives favour.

The majority view was that the American visit so late in a campaign would be possible but on balance unwise, since three full campaigning days, excluding Sunday, would be lost and two others partly lost.

Mrs Thatcher's programme, which it was said last night could not be shortened, entails leaving London in the early evening of Thursday, May 26, and returning, at the earliest, by noon on Tuesday, May 31. The Williamsburg conference is due to end with a state banquet on the Monday night which she is said to be reluctant to miss.

Labour strategists meet to
plan marginal seats attack

By Paul Routledge, Labour Editor

Labour Party strategists will formalize their plans today to win 103 key marginal seats which would take them within striking distance of a parliamentary majority.

Campaign organization for the general election is expected to dominate the two-day "summit of the Left", bringing together the Shadow Cabinet, union leaders and the party's national executive at the Woodstock education college of the General, Municipal, Boilermakers and Allied Trades Unions.

Strategy papers for the conference in the possession of *The Times* list the "target" marginals. Fifty-four were with Conservatives in the May 1979 poll, two by nationalists and 49 by Labour. They must be retained if Mr Michael Foot is to have any chance of becoming Prime Minister.

If Labour's plan to win all those "category A" constituencies succeeds, Labour would

emerge as the largest party in the Commons. Mr Foot would then be obliged to seek an accommodation with the smaller parties, or win a minority administration.

Exact comparisons with the last general election are impossible because of extensive changes in the boundaries of many constituencies. But using the authoritative calculations for the new parliament published in *The Almanac of British Politics* by Mr Robert Waller (Croom Helm £12.95), the marginals strategy, if successful would give Labour 313 seats in a 650-seat House of Commons.

The Tories would become the second largest party, with 306 seats.

The list of marginals registers internal party anxiety about the possible impact of SDP influence in 15 constituencies, particularly in the London area, the South-west, East Midlands and new towns around the capital.

Labour's campaign paper also undermines the conventional wisdom that the party sees the West Midlands as pivotal to its election hopes. Only three Conservative seats are identified in that region as target constituencies, compared with twice as many in the East Midlands and nine in the politically-volatile North-western area.

The list, drawn up by Mr David Hughes, national agent of the party, in consultation with Labour's local agents, is supplemented by a "B" category of just over 80 seats that would only be winnable in a landslide for the Left.

This table is certain to be revised in the light of yesterday's local elections, and in any event some of the seats it includes come into the wishful-thinking category - such as Banbury, which has a Tory majority of 13,000.

Continued on back page, col 3

Fault found
in deck
of frigateBy Rodney Cowton
Defence Correspondent

The Royal Navy has had to withdraw a frigate from service in the North Atlantic because of cracking in its upper deck. The ship, HMS Amazon, is one of six Type 21 frigates in the Royal Navy, all of which will need to have their hulls strengthened because of the problem of cracking.

The problem in the Type 21s has been known about for 18 months, and a programme had been instituted for strengthening them one at a time. Work on HMS Arrow has been virtually completed though she is still at Devonport dockyard.

HMS Amazon was scheduled to go into Devonport for refit in August, but has had to be prematurely withdrawn from service, apparently because the problem in her has developed either more rapidly or more seriously than had been foreseen.

The Type-21 was designed by Vosper Thornycroft in collaboration with Yarrow, and was the first class of warship for many years to be designed for the Royal Navy by commercial firms rather than by the Ministry of Defence's own design teams.

A controversial feature of the design was the use of aluminium in the upper parts of the ship, and it is believed to be in the aluminium that the cracking has occurred.

● HMS Ambuscade, a 2,815-ton Type 21 frigate, was in collision with a 5,760-ton American cruiser, the USS Dale, while they were on joint exercises in the Indian Ocean on April 27. The Ambuscade's bows were damaged, and she is being repaired in Bombay. The USS Dale was held on the port side.

£350m for Britain in
Robin Hood charter

From Ian Murray, Brussels

The European Commission presented its new "Robin Hood's charter" in Brussels yesterday, setting out what it described as the only possible solution for saving the EEC from bankruptcy. If accepted by member states, it would increase the Community's ability to spend by some £3,300m, at present levels.

The plan, which would basically take money from the rich countries to give to the poor, could reduce Britain's EEC budget deficit by between a third and a half. If it were implemented now, that would mean a saving of about £350m over the year.

The plan was necessary, Mr Gaston Thorn, the Commission president, said, because the Community was on the point of running out of money, owing to "a disturbing increase" in agricultural expenditure. It was also high time for a better balance to be found between revenue and expenditure. The plan does not include specific new proposals on how the extra money will be spent.

The main plank of the Commission's argument is that there must be an increase in the amount of money available for the Community budget. The Commission therefore wants member states to increase the amount of value-added tax revenue they pay into the budget from 1 per cent of their total receipts to 1.4 per cent.

Such an increase would have to be approved by parliaments in all member states, but the Commission is asking that future increases could be agreed, when necessary, by the Council and the European Parliament alone.

The second main plank is to hold agricultural spending down to no more than a third of the total budget. Any extra money would have to be raised by "modulated" value-added tax, which would take into account both the relative prosperity of member states and the amount of agricultural produce each was responsible for.

Details of plan, page 7

Television row goes on

League may lose sponsor's £3m offer

The Football League announced yesterday that Canon (UK) Limited are to sponsor the League for £3m over the next three years. But the contract, the biggest in British sport, depends on the outcome of talks between the club chairman and the television companies, which broke down yesterday.

The chairman, who met in London, rejected the latest television proposals but voted unanimously for the management committee to renegotiate a new deal. The BBC and ITV, after hearing the decision,

immediately withdrew their offer, worth a total of £5.4m over the next two seasons.

John Bromley, the head of sport at London Weekend, said: "We are further away from reaching agreement than we have ever been in the last seven months. Football has got to realize that it is no longer one of the great sports on television. It has lost its way and is gradually strangling itself to death."

Martin Walter, the chairman of Canon, commented: "If no television deal is agreed, obviously we will look at whether



Paris clashes: Small businessmen demonstrating against the Government's austerity measures yesterday break through police barricades.

Shelling in
Beirut
worst since
siegeFrom Katherine Doonan
Beirut

Just when it appeared that diplomatic efforts to bring peace to Lebanon might bear fruit, Beirut came under the heaviest shelling yesterday since the Israeli siege last summer. Both Christian and Muslim sectors of the capital and its outskirts were struck by 120mm shells and mortar rounds.

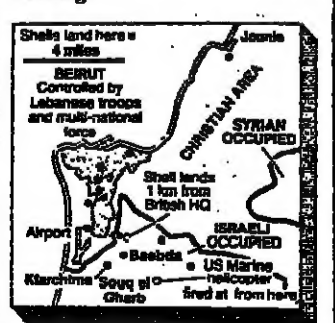
At least eight people were killed and 22 others wounded in the shelling that began without warning at 11.45am local time, catching most residents by surprise. One man was reportedly killed when a rocket smashed through his bathroom wall, killing him instantly as he bathed.

A US Marine Huey-type helicopter that took off from Beirut airport on a reconnaissance flight to determine the source of the shelling came under fire and had to turn back after the shots punched three holes into it. Colonel James Mead, commander of the US Marine contingent of the international peacekeeping force, was in the aircraft but neither he nor the pilot was hurt.

Major Fred Lash, a spokesman for the Marines, said the 50 calibre rounds were fired from the mountain village of Souk el Ghard in the Israeli-occupied Alei district. The village is a stronghold of the Christian militia.

The shelling came after fighting had intensified this week between the right-wing Christian Lebanese Forces and the left-wing Druze of the Socialist Progressive Party. The fighting had been concentrated mainly in the mountainous south-east of Beirut, occasionally spilling over to the south-eastern suburbs.

● LONDON: Mr Nicholas Harrington, head of the British interests section at the Swedish Embassy in Tehran since 1981, has been appointed Ambassador to Lebanon in succession to Sir David Roberts who is retiring.



Shelling heard here in Beirut. Controlled by Lebanese troops and multi-national force.

Thatcher rejects
Soviet proposals
for missiles

By Philip Webster, Political Reporter

Mrs Margaret Thatcher yesterday rejected Soviet proposals to include the British strategic nuclear force within the Geneva talks over intermediate nuclear forces, although she welcomed the offer by Mr Andropov, the Soviet leader, to negotiate about the numbers of warheads rather than missiles.

As it was announced that MPs would be having a debate next Tuesday and Wednesday on defence and disarmament, Mr Thatcher and Mr Michael Foot, the Labour leader, clashed in the Commons over the Government's response to the Soviet move.

The Prime Minister said that the British nuclear deterrent was at the "irreducible minimum" after Mr Foot had argued that if the Government blocked the proposal to include the British nuclear force in the talks, the conference might be wrecked. He later described Mrs Thatcher's response as "hopelessly inadequate".

Mrs Thatcher had said it was totally wrong to suggest that Britain's last resort submarine-based nuclear weapons should be included in the INF talks which were about land-based

weapons. "For the Soviet Union to suggest that and leave out of account her own strategic weapons is meant to delude the British public. It must not succeed in doing so," she said.

After Mr Roy Jenkins, leader of the Social Democratic Party, had remarked that the Andropov move had been much more coolly received in London than in Washington, Mrs Thatcher welcomed the apparent Soviet concession on warheads. "That is what Nato has always wanted. That particular part of the proposal is to be welcomed."

She said she would not encourage President Reagan to take the advice of the House of Representatives in its vote yesterday to support a nuclear freeze. That, she said, would freeze in the superiority of the Soviet Union and hinder the objective of those who wanted genuine disarmament with reductions on both sides.

"To abandon our deterrent would be one-sided disarmament. The deterrent is the first and most important part of our defence."

Control of
cruise is
clarifiedBy Rodney Cowton
Defence Correspondent

The controversy over the deployment of cruise missiles has led to clarification of the 1951 agreement with the United States governing the use of nuclear weapons based in Britain.

It has been established that the agreement for joint decision-making would apply to cruise missiles, not only on their bases at Greenham Common and Molesworth, but also when deployed up to 100 miles away in times of tension.

The Government has rejected demands for "dual-key" control because it is satisfied with the 1951 agreement. However, it is understood that persistent questioning about the precise details of the agreement led to consultations with the American Government to make certain that it satisfactorily covered the mobile cruise missiles.

Until now the standard public reference to the 1951 agreement by the Prime Minister and others has been to the effect that the use of bases in Britain for mounting nuclear operations in an emergency would be a matter for joint decision by the Government and the United States Government in the light of the circumstances prevailing at the time.

However, it has been suggested that cruise missiles might be dispersed up to 100 miles from their bases.

Mr Michael Heseltine, Secretary of State for Defence, said in Parliament on Tuesday that the 1951 agreement "specifically provides that no weapons or bases used by the Americans under agreements with us will be used without the joint decision of the President and the Prime Minister."

Students
attack
French
policeFrom Diana Geddes
Paris

Police used teargas and batons in violent clashes with two big demonstrations in Paris yesterday. One involved some 20,000 shopkeepers and other owners of small businesses, protesting against price controls and other austerity measures, the second an estimated 8,000 students protesting against planned reforms of higher education.

The clash with the students was once again provoked by a small minority of extreme right-wingers, wearing crash helmets and scarves over their faces, who attacked the assembled riot police near the Pont d'Assommoir in the Fourth Arrondissement with Molotov cocktails and stones. Similar incidents occurred last Friday.

The police responded with tear gas grenades, backed up by water cannons, while police motorcyclists gave chase down the narrow streets near the Jardin des Plantes, where some students had erected barricades of burning tyres. First reports indicated that about 30 students were arrested. Three policemen were hurt.

The incidents broke out towards the end of the demonstration at about 6 p.m. Earlier, thousands of students, mostly from Paris, but also from the provinces, had marched peacefully under banners insisting on their apolitical character.

"Neither Right nor Left, but united against the reform", the banners proclaimed, while students chanted the slogan that has become almost a signature tune of their demonstrations: "Hot, hot, the spring will be hot!"

The clash with the shopkeepers, cafe owners, hairdressers, and other small businessmen came as demonstrators tried to break through police lines in an attempt to reach the headquarters of the government office of Trade and Commerce on the Quai Branly.

The enraged demonstrators hurled stones and other objects at the police, and erected a barricade across the Avenue Bosquet with paving stones and other material from nearby roadworks.

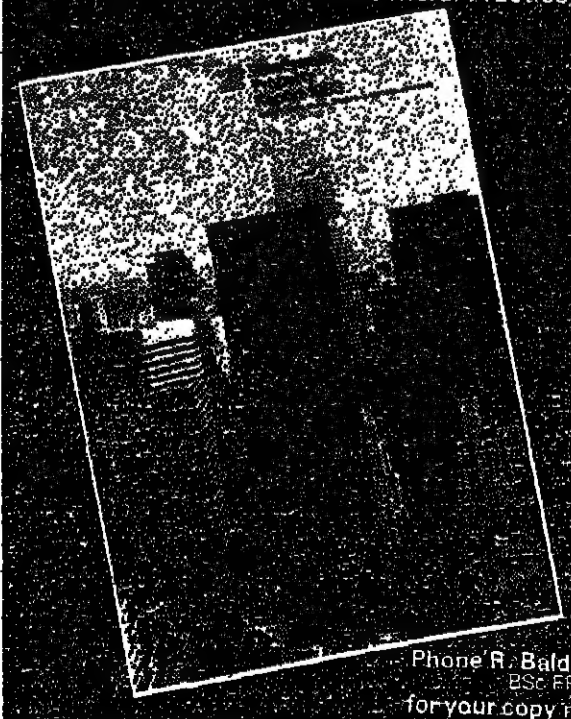
As the mass protests continued throughout France, M. Pierre Mauroy, the Prime Minister, insisted that there was no question of the Government's accepting any "slippage" in its economic targets. He hinted strongly at the possible introduction of new even more stringent austerity measures.

"The Mauroy plan, mark three, is still in force," he said in an interview with Agence France Presse. "I believe in the policy that I am pursuing. I am determined that it will succeed, and I am convinced that it will."

Property
Report 1983

United Kingdom France Germany and USA

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- ☐ Industrial and
- ☐ Warehouse Market
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Diary tells of mother's death fear

Miss Beverley Brooke, who gave birth to a baby boy while she was on a life support machine in hospital, kept a diary detailing the events of the last few weeks before she died.

Miss Brooke, aged 19, died on Wednesday when doctors at Leeds General Infirmary turned off the machine 24 hours after her baby was born by caesarean section.

She describes in her diary the varying with the baby's father, who is not named. And she talks of her expectation that she was going to die as her head pains, double vision and dizziness grew worse in the month leading to the baby's birth.

Mrs Noeline Colley, Miss Brooke's mother, who lives at Dewsbury, said: "I have found Beverley's diary, but most of the contents are private."

"She describes the events of the weeks before her death. She was in hospital several times, but she discharged herself because she was not happy with the treatment she was getting. She told me she knew she was going to die."

Mrs Colley is calling for an inquiry into the case.

London taxi fares to go up

London taxi fares will go up from May 19. Mr William Whitelaw, the Home Secretary announced yesterday. The new tariff will incorporate a minimum fare of 60p (including a hiring charge of 40p) for the first 15 minutes or two minutes, 12 seconds.

The rate will then be 10p for each 30 seconds or one minute six seconds up to six minutes and 10p for each 10 minutes, or 48 seconds, thereafter. Except for the charge for hirings after midnight which will rise from 40p to 60p, the extra charges will remain unchanged.

Dock strike is over

A seven-week strike by 2,300 dock workers at Tilbury ended yesterday with both sides in the dispute claiming victory.

The men voted to return to work saying their claim for parity with white collar workers had been met, but the Port of London Authority said it has not been conceded.

Housekeeper gives up home

Mrs Adah Penny, aged 55, the £250-a-week housekeeper dismissed by the Dowager Lady Radnor after seeking a pay rise, has given up her home to avoid eviction proceedings.

A tribunal had rejected Mrs Penny's claim and awarded her £45 redundancy cash. Mrs Penny and her retired bricklayer husband were due to be taken to the county court at Salisbury, Wiltshire, today by Lady Radnor.

Candidate for Livingston

Mr Robin Cook, a Labour routebreaker, has been selected as party candidate for the new parliamentary constituency of Livingston, a seat for which Mr Wedgwood Benn's name had been actively canvassed. (Anthony Bevins writes).

Coal industry must abandon hopeless pits, chairman says

By Paul Routledge, Labour Editor

Mr Norman Siddall, chairman of the National Coal Board yesterday began a process of softening-up militant opinion among the miners, warning them that "we must pull of the hopeless pits".

Addressing the conference of the traditionally moderate Lancashire colliers, he said: "We are producing too much coal, too expensively. The coal glut is likely to prompt the closure of 15 pits with the loss of 15,000 jobs in 1983-84."

"I know that as trade unionists you do not enjoy seeing employment in the industry coming down. You naturally want there to be as many jobs as possible in coalmining."

"But they have to be real jobs, paying for themselves in terms of coal at prices the customer will be prepared to pay. Jobs based on the highest efficiency we can achieve, in other words, jobs men will feel secure in."

The coal board does not expect any improvement in the overall demand for coal over the next year, and says that the continuing economic recession has invalidated the ambitious projections of demand drawn up with the previous Labour Government.

The NCB has spent £3.125m on modernizing deep mines, and will spend a further £7.45m this year as part of the long-term plan to bring into production 42 million tonnes of new capacity.

Mr Siddall added: "At the same time as we create highly efficient new capacity we must pull out of the hopeless pits which are preventing the industry from adapting itself to the needs of the market."

"We are producing too much coal, too expensively. In saying that, I am not blaming the men working in the problem pits. Over and over again we see the skill and effort of first-class men being wasted because of the physical problems, while elsewhere we are creating excellent conditions."

Since 1974-75 the industry had closed 63 pits employing about 23,000 men, but alternative jobs had been provided for about 15,000 and only 5,900 men had been made redundant. Of these, most were voluntary and more than 90 per cent were aged 55 and over.

The board's policy would be to treat as generously as possible every man who was no longer able to continue working, Mr Siddall said.

Addressing the same conference, Mr David Lea, assistant general secretary of the TUC, said: "The last four years have seen an unprecedented battering of our nationalized industries."

"We are now told that four years of this mayhem is only the beginning. We have been warned. If the lot get back, the members of the next four years will make the past four look like merely a slight difference of opinion."

Jaguar sales boom may bring nightshift

By Clifford Webb

Jaguar Cars' remarkable recovery from losses of £2m a month only two years ago to record sales at home and overseas has so outstripped production that the company may be forced to introduce a night shift more than a year earlier than planned.

The Coventry plant has not operated a nightshift for more than four years. But production has increased from 14,000 cars in 1980 to 22,000 last year and will reach an estimated 28,000 this year. A peak production of 32,000 cars was reached in the 1970s, with double-shift work and 4,000 more employees.

Mr John Egan, the chairman of Jaguar Cars who was recently voted Midlander of the Year for restoring the fortunes of the Midlands company, has always insisted that he would not make the mistake of his predecessors and increase his labour force to meet short-term sales booms.

But in the face of growing order books and lengthening delivery times it is now widely expected that he will have to act soon. The 7,200-strong work force is operating extensive overtime, including weekend work. Jaguar sales in the United States reached a record of 1,336 cars last month, an increase of 64 per cent on April, 1982, and equal to six months sales in 1980. From 3,000 that year, US

sales rose to 4,200 in 1981 and 10,300 last year. The original forecast of 12,000 for this year is being revised to more than 14,000.

European sales in the first three months of this year increased by 58 per cent, with Germany leading the field. Jaguar admit, however, that it is starting from a very small base, with only 2,500 sales in the whole of Europe last year.

Japanese cars assembled in Australia are to go on sale in Britain today against growing protests that they are a thinly disguised method of by-passing the ceiling on Japanese sales here, which restricts their quota to 10 per cent of the UK market.

The cars, called Lonsdales, are manufactured by Mitsubishi Motors in Adelaide, South Australia, and are said to contain 85 per cent Australian-made components.

Prices range from £5,699 for a 1.6 litre saloon to £8,299 for a 2.6 litre automatic estate.

A British Leyland subsidiary, the Aveling Barford engineering works, in Grantham, issued redundancy notices yesterday to 800 of their 1,100 workers who had refused to accept a productivity deal to save the company.

The company produces equipment for the construction industry.



Corporal David Timms, one of those injured by an IRA bomb which killed seven members of the Royal Green Jackets band in Regent's Park, London, last year, among the relatives attending a memorial tree planting yesterday. Two weeping willows were planted near the bandstand by Mrs Sandra Barker, widow of Sergeant-Major Graham Barker, and Mrs Dorothy Heritage (Photograph: Steve Blogg).

Ministers' nuclear war plea

By Nicholas Timmins

Two ministers are to address the British Medical Association's central committee today to emphasize the need for civil defence planning in the event of nuclear war.

Mr Patrick Mayhew, Minister of State at the Home Office, who is responsible for civil defence, and Mr Geoffrey Finsberg, Under-Secretary of State at the Department of Health, are to address the community physicians, who play a key part in the health services' planning for a nuclear war, at the invitation of their chairman, Dr Stuart Horner.

Dr Horner was a member of the BMA working party which produced a highly critical report of the Government's civil defence plans in March.

With the approval of his committee's executive, he has tabled a motion for the BMA's annual representative meeting next month urging community physicians to take no further part in such plans until the criticisms in the BMA report have been met. The full committee will be asked to approve that motion today.

The report concluded that effective planning along the lines envisaged is not possible in the face of a large attack; that an attack with a single weapon on a city would overwhelm the whole National Health Service; and that deaths and injuries from a 200 megaton attack would be two to two and half times greater than those estimated by the Home Office.

The Home Office is revising its estimates

Uproar in Dail over Heseltine remarks

By Richard Ford

A dispute broke out in the Dublin Parliament yesterday over the critical remarks on Irish neutrality made in Belfast on Wednesday by Mr Michael Heseltine, Secretary of State for Defence, and as Mr James Prior, Secretary of State for Northern Ireland arrived in the city for talks with government ministers.

During the rowdy exchanges in the Dail, Mr Charles Haughey, the Opposition leader, said that Mr Heseltine's remarks were "a blatant attack on Ireland's neutrality", and he urged Dr Garret FitzGerald, the Prime Minister, to make a strong protest to Mrs Margaret Thatcher about Mr Heseltine's "unwarranted intervention".

As the uproar continued the Speaker said he could not allow the House to be bullied and the sitting was adjourned for 20 minutes.

Afterwards Mr Haughey in a statement questioned whether Dr FitzGerald should have met Mr Prior after the "offensive remarks made about Irish neutrality". He also questioned whether he should have met Mr Prior after a refusal of a formal request by Dr FitzGerald to meet Mrs Thatcher.

Meanwhile Mr Prior on his surprise visit to Dublin, which was aimed at improving Anglo-Irish relations, toured the Royal Dublin Show accompanied by Mr Peter Barry, the Minister for Foreign Affairs. Later he met Dr FitzGerald and Mr Richard Spring, the Labour leader and deputy Prime Minister, for the first time since the Fine Gael-Labour coalition government came to power last December.

Provisional Sinn Féin, the

Hitler art on display after 'test'

By Alan Hamilton

Forty-one paintings believed to be the work of Adolf Hitler, the minor Austrian watercolourist, went on show yesterday at Longleat House, Wiltshire, the home of Lord Bath.

He bought his first two "Hitlers" at Sotheby's for £600 the pair in 1960 to add to his collection of Churchill memorabilia. He decided to put his collection on public display for the first time in response to the current vogue for the work of Hitler, the diarist.

Lord Bath is reasonably convinced that his paintings are the work of Hitler, who was Chancellor of Germany from 1933 to 1945.

Most of the works are views to old Vienna, believed to have been copied from postcards and showing more promise than talent for imitation than for any breadth of imagination.

There is one oil, a solid still life of roses. One water-colour depicting the Berchtesgaden mountain retreat tends towards the Victorian romanticism of Landseer.

There is also one work, almost in the nature of a cartoon, showing two German soldiers playing chess in the Great War trenches at Douaumont, said to have been painted by the artist for his mother.

During his formative period the artist is known to have spent several years in Vienna, painting to pay his rent at a men's hostel and producing an estimated 1,000 works between 1907 and the early 1930s, when he was diverted to a political career. Two of the pictures on show were offered for exhibition to the Austrian Academy of Art in 1907, but were rejected.

After purchasing his first two paintings at auction, Lord Bath was approached by Peter Jahn, the artist's cultural adviser, during his period of diversion into politics, and still living in Austria.

Herr Jahn gathered nearly sixty of his late master's paintings and sold them to Lord Bath for an average of £250 each. Most of the works are accompanied by a declaration from Herr Jahn testifying to their provenance.

Observers at yesterday's preview were concerned at the variety of signatures on the canvases. Some say "A Hitler" in block capitals, some are signed "Adolf Hitler" in a lumpy and inelegant script, and some bear the mere initials "AH".

Lord Bath is, however, satisfied with Herr Jahn's authentication of the works. He is, Lord Bath says, probably the only man alive who can say whether they are genuine.

Science report

How wild horses can cause abortions

By the Staff of Nature

When a wild stallion wins control of a harem from a rival, one dramatic consequence is that most of the pregnant members of the harem abort their foetuses. So concludes Dr Joel Berger, of the Smithsonian Institution, Front Royal, Virginia, who has been studying some of the 40,000 wild horses of the Great Basin Desert of North America.

Dr Berger selected a group of 129 horses confined to the Granite Range mountains in Nevada, and has watched them for 7,000 hours over the last four years, long enough to be able to claim to know the ages of 90 per cent of the horses.

He found that in harems dominated by a single male throughout the 11 month period of gestation 82 per cent of pregnancies ended with live births. But in unstable harems, where a second or even third stallion had taken control, there were less than half as many successful pregnancies. Closer study, correcting for age (older mares being less successful at bearing viable foals) showed a 90 per cent abortion rate for mares in their first six months of pregnancy if their harem was conquered by a new stallion.

Dr Berger observed that harem takeovers are characterized by copulations between its members and the new male, but only after he has continually and aggressively bitten and chased them. This amounts to forced copulation, compared to the usual friendly course of events. Presumably forced copulation plays some part in inducing abortions, but since several abortions were also observed in the absence of forced copulation, general stress must also be a cause.

The presumed advantage to the new stallion of his actions is that it enables him to propagate his own genes, not those of a rival. In doing so the horse has at least settled for a slightly more "ethical" method than that of infanticide which is used for similar purposes by some other wild animals, including lions.

Source: *Nature* 5 May 1983 vol 303 p 59

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New Comet approaching the Earth

By Our Science Editor

The discovery of a new comet was announced last night to a meeting in London of the Royal Society. It has been called the IRAS-Akari-Alcock, after the names of those who, within days of each other, have confirmed its existence.

The object is approaching the Earth, and should be visible, certainly with good binoculars, near the Plough about May 11. Then it should be at closest, some three million miles away.

The account to the Royal Society of the discovery began on April 25, when a group of scientists from Leicester University and the Rutherford Appleton Laboratory, Oxford, were monitoring the streams of data coming from the Infrared Astronomy Satellite, IRAS, launched recently to detect stars and galaxies which cannot be seen from Earth-bound observatories.

The equipment it carries to make a map of the Universe is up to a thousand times more sensitive than existing instruments.

Lords clear doctors of negligence

By Frances Gibb, Legal Affairs Correspondent

Doctors who were accused of subjecting a woman to a "wholly unjustified" operation which left her with a paralysed vocal cord were unanimously cleared of negligence by the House of Lords yesterday.

Five Law Lords rejected an appeal by Mrs Blondell Maynard, a staff nurse, against West Midlands Regional Health Authority for the operation, at East Birmingham Hospital in 1970.

She claimed that the physician and surgeon responsible were guilty of an error of professional judgment so as to constitute a breach of duty of care. Contrary to strong medical indications that she had tuberculosis, they held back from firm diagnosis and instead performed a biopsy of glands between her lungs, she claimed.

But giving judgment, Lord Scarman said: "Differences of opinion and practice exist, and will always exist, in the medical as in other professions. There is seldom any one answer exclusive of all others to problems of professional judgment."

Lord Scarman said that it was

not enough to show that there was a body of competent professional opinion which considered that the decision by the doctors was wrong, if there was also a body of professional opinion, equally competent, which supported the decision as reasonable in the circumstances.

Nor was it enough to show that subsequent events indicated that the operation need never have been performed, if at the time of the decision to operate was taken it was reasonable in the sense that a responsible body of medical opinion would have accepted it as proper.

With Lord Fraser of Tullybelton, Elwyn-Jones, Lord Roskill and Lord Templeman, he supported the majority Court of Appeal finding against Mrs Maynard, then aged 41.

But Mrs Maynard, of Vibart Road, South Yardley, Birmingham, is pursuing a second claim, in which negligence has been found in her favour against Hillingdon Area Health Authority and Mr Norman Nohl-Oser, a consultant

IBA talks on Equity dispute

By Kenneth Gosling

Mr John Whitney, the director-general of the Independent Broadcasting Authority (IBA), has invited the two sides involved in the dispute over television advertising to informal talks at the authority's London headquarters on Wednesday.

Neither Mr Peter Plowley, the general secretary of Equity, the actors' union nor Mr David Wheeler, the director of the Institute of Practitioners in Advertising, who have both accepted the invitation, knows what may be proposed.

However, in March the IBA suggested an independent commission of inquiry, which was accepted by the IPA but rejected by Equity.



Mr John Whitney. No quick results expected

The two sides have been at loggerheads for months over the amount actors should be paid for repeated showings of commercials in Channels 4 and TV-am.

Equity, which has suggested that on a temporary basis they be paid half the full independent television rate, wants payment based on the number of repeats. The IPA insists, however, that audience size should be the main consideration.

It has been emphasized that the talks are informal and probably unlikely to yield any immediate results. But the IBA has clearly been worried by the union's decision at its recent annual meeting to set a July deadline for a deal to be reached, otherwise Equity says, it will seek to renegotiate its main independent television agreement.

Paras queued up for mass rape court told

A young paratrooper told a court yesterday that members of his regiment queued up to rape a teenage girl despite her pleas to be left alone.

The alleged incident took place in November, 1981, in an Army barracks at Aldershot. The soldier told Winchester Crown Court that two girls and three soldiers had come into his billet. One of the soldiers had taken a mattress from a bed and left the room with one of the girls. The other and a soldier lay down on a bed together.

Later, he said, a group of drunken paratroopers came into the billet. "They were shouting and calling 'gang bang, queue up, and get the others,'" he said. "The girl was struggling but I didn't think she needed help," he added. Asked by Mr Stephen O'Malley, for the prosecution, what happened next, he said: "Two of the men then urinated on the girl. Then, after they had finished with her, they chased her from the room."

Before the court are four

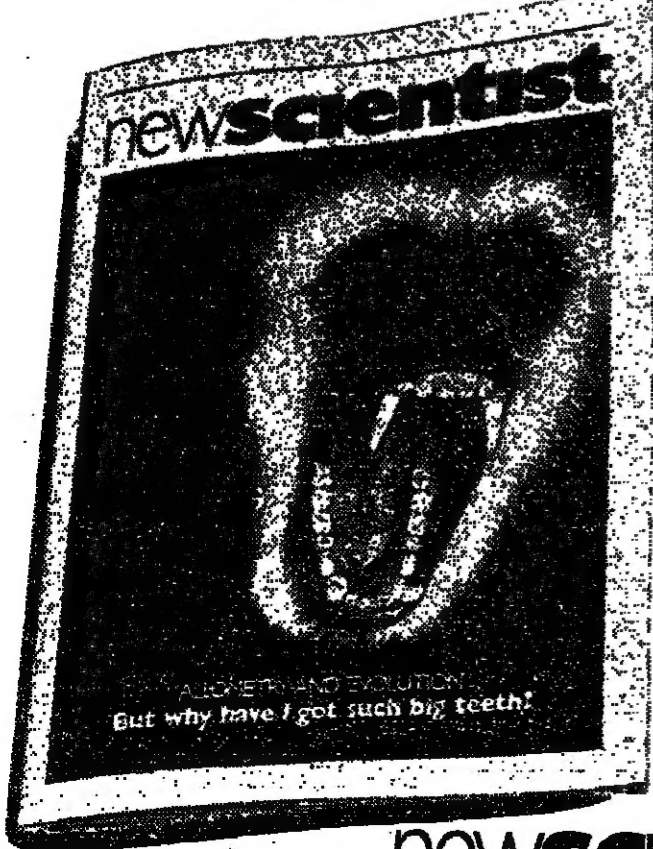
soldiers who deny raping the girl. One also denies having unlawful sexual intercourse with her. The other three all deny indecently assaulting her. A fifth soldier has admitted rape, and a sixth denies indecent and common assault.

Four paratroopers said the girl had been in bed with another soldier when a group of them burst in and started to molest her. One witness told the court: "They all gathered around the girl and started shouting 'gang bang'."

Two of the witnesses have claimed they were threatened with violence if they told anyone about the incident. One told the court "I did not fancy getting my face filled in." A soldier said he saw the girl sexually abused with a rolled up magazine. Another told the court: "The girl seemed to be enjoying sex with the first man, but when the others burst in all she wanted to do was get out of the place."

The trial continues today.

"Why have I got such big teeth?"



In the past few years, Charles Darwin, the man who started modern biology, has been attacked from all sides. This week in *News Scientist* we see how monkeys, apes and deer are yet again proving that Darwin stands up better than his critics. We also ask whether German science can survive the muddle in its universities; and preview the flat screen TV you can wear on your wrist.

news scientist

Every Thursday

Parachutist injured in saving Red Devils colleague from crashing

By Craig Seton

A leading member of the Red Devils parachute team was in hospital with a broken back yesterday after he saved a colleague from plummeting 1,000ft to his death when a spectacular mid-air manoeuvre went wrong.

Sergeant-major Kenneth Yeoman, aged 37, of The Parachute Regiment, caught hold of Corporal Kenneth Campbell, aged 25, when his colleague's parachute collapsed, and held on even when his own canopy partially folded, and the two hit the ground.

Sergeant-major Yeoman landed on his spine. He was rushed to Truro hospital, where he underwent emergency surgery. He was said yesterday to be partially paralysed in his legs.

Corporal Campbell managed a correct parachute landing and suffered only severe bruising and shock.

The accident happened on Wednesday night over RAF St Mawgan, in Cornwall, where nine members of the Red Devils were practising a jump from 10,000ft from an Islander aircraft.

Captain Michael Munn, the team leader, who witnessed it

from the ground, said: "If it had not been for Sergeant-major Yeoman's cool head throughout it could have been even worse for Corporal Campbell than it was for him."

He said the two had dropped 7,000ft, most of it before



Sergeant-major Yeoman held colleague when parachute collapsed.

opening their parachutes, when they started a manoeuvre called canopy relative work. This involves the two men linking their straps so that Sergeant-major Yeoman would be positioned immediately above his colleague, giving the appearance that he was standing on his shoulders.

Then the corporal's parachute collapsed. Captain Munn said: "They were still more than 1,000ft up and Corporal Campbell may well have fallen from there. The Sergeant-major made sure that the corporal was secure, and it looked as if both men would get down on the one parachute, certainly to a hard landing, but reasonably safely."

The second parachute then partially collapsed. Captain Munn said: "It still had some lift, but the two men came down the last 800ft at 60 degrees and very fast. It was obvious right away that the Sergeant-major was badly hurt."

Sergeant-major Yeoman's wife visited him yesterday. He has three children and lives in married quarters at Aldershot. He has been with the Red Devils for four years and was to have led the team in a display in Berlin this month.

Given a new lease of life by a change of heart



Ticking happily: Mr Coffey with his wife and son; giving his approval on cycling and (below) returning to football.



By Our Science Editor

Mr Paul Coffey, aged 27, received his new heart on February 26, 1980. Before the operation he could scarcely sit up in bed; last Saturday he was playing his regular game of football.

He said yesterday: "I feel almost fitter than before I was taken ill, but that is probably because I am aware of the need to keep in trim. And that means sticking to a sensible diet and only an occasional drink."

The illness that nearly killed him, Mr Coffey now regards as only an interruption. But he believes he had an advantage because his wife was a nursing sister and so understood what was involved medically and psychologically. Mrs Coffey, who was a charge nurse before the transplant, is now a clinical teacher in psychiatry at New Cross Hospital and is studying for higher examinations later this year.

Yet four years ago it was the severest exertion to walk 25 yards. Today he cycles and plays cricket, and squash racquets as well as football.

The deterioration that led to the need for a new heart was quite rapid. It began the previous summer with a violent attack of stomach pain. That was followed by a general debility, which resembled a severe bout of influenza. At first doctors suspected he had on of the exhausting systemic infections, such as glandular fever.

He was soon unable to walk a few hundred yards. A specialist in Birmingham diagnosed cardiac myopathy, a degeneration of the heart muscles, which was confirmed by Mr Terence English after Mr Coffey was referred to Papworth. The only remedy the doctors could offer was a transplant. Within five weeks he received a new heart.

Mrs Susan Coffey said: "Looking back on it, we did not seem to have time to be frightened. But more than anything else, the confidence of the staff at Papworth gave us any feeling of doubt that it would not work, and confidence that Paul would be back to work."

Mr Coffey said: "The people at work have been a great help, because they accepted me back instantly as Paul Coffey and not some oddity."

"The main difference between now and before the heart condition is that I take a regular medication each day. But I take the necessary tablets as automatically as brushing my teeth. Every three months I have to attend a routine out-patient clinic; that takes only a matter of minutes. Once a year I check into Papworth for a full overhaul."

Transplant programmes face uncertain future

By Pearce Wright, Science Editor

Surgeons at Papworth Hospital, Cambridge, have carried out the fifth heart transplant since the programme began in January, 1979.

The recipient was a former Post Office employee, aged 40, of Keighley, West Yorkshire. His operation, which started on Wednesday night and ended in the early hours of yesterday, was the 101st in Britain.

A hospital official said: "The operation went smoothly and his new heart is working well. The patient is a married man with a family, but the hospital is not releasing his name at the request of his relatives."

If the transplant work which started in 1968 but soon stopped in a glut of had publicity is included, then rather more than 101 heart replacements have been carried out in Britain. That number includes the "piggy-back" operations conducted by Mr Magdi Yacoub's team at Harefield Hospital, Middlesex, in which a donor heart is linked in parallel with a failing heart.

Yesterday's heart transplant operation at Papworth would be one of the last for some time because the future of heart replacements rests on the conclusions of a review

ordered 18 months ago by the Department of Health and Social Security. The purpose was to assess progress over the past four years at Papworth and Harefield. The report is due in September.

The two hospitals were nominated for the resumption of transplant surgery in January, 1979, after a gap of 10 years on the recommendation of the Government's Transplant Advisory Panel.

Uncertainty about the future comes at a time when the survival rate of transplant recipients is improving rapidly. In the two years after Dr Christian Barnard did the first heart-swap, in December, 1967, at Groote Schuur Hospital, Cape Town, fewer than one in five patients survived each year, but the prospects now for survival for 12 months are better than eight in ten.

Furthermore, once past that hurdle, the five-year survival rate is expected to be 90 per cent. The longest surviving heart transplant patient is M. Emmanuel Vitra, of Marseilles, a former wine salesman, now aged 61, who celebrated the fourteenth anniversary of his new heart at the end of last year. By last summer, more than 750 heart transplants had been done in 74 countries. The greatest number have been



performed by a team working with Professor Norman Shumway at Stanford University, California.

His achievements are better than those anywhere else. At the last meeting of the International Transplantation Society he reported on 254 transplants since 1968; of these, 87 were alive, the longest for twelve and a half years. He attributes recent improvements in chances of survival to the introduction

three years ago of a new anti-rejection drug, cyclosporin-A.

Research continues for still more effective ways of combating rejection. Nevertheless, a shadow hangs over progress in science and medicine, lack of money.

A heart replacement costs about £20,000 for the surgery and post-operative care. The number of people in Britain who could benefit from a transplant and be returned to active life is about fifty a year.

Solicitors liable for crash damages

By Francis Gibb, Legal Affairs Correspondent

A firm of solicitors which failed to lodge a claim for compensation in time after a woman who jumped over a car accident in a car accident is liable for the heavy damages to which she is entitled, the House of Lords held yesterday.

Five Law Lords unanimously ruled that the solicitors must be held liable for the loss of a six-figure claim by Miss Lorna Deerness, aged 25, of Baldock, Hertfordshire, after she was rendered a paraplegic in an accident in 1977.

They upheld a Court of Appeal ruling last October that Miss Deerness could not proceed against the insurance company of the defendants because a clerk in A. E. Hamlin and Co, the firm of solicitors then handling the claim, omitted to serve a writ within the specified time.

Giving judgment, Lord Diplock said: "What this appeal is really about is a squabble between the solicitors' insurers and Cornhill (Insurance) Company as to which of them will have to pay the heavy damages to which the plaintiff is undoubtedly entitled."

He added that Miss Deerness would not suffer, as she had received £100,000, which was the limit on leave to appeal to the Lords being granted. She should now receive the balance, he said.

"The solicitors' insurers will have to pay out for a rise that they insured and for which they charged a premium; so they have suffered no injustice."

"Cornhill have had the good luck to escape having to pay out for a risk that they had insured and for which they too had charged a premium, but in liability insurance business, as between two insurers, the only question is which of them is to pay a claim, one cannot blame either insurer for taking advantage of his good luck."

Miss Deerness, who now works as a trainer at the North Hertfordshire Education Centre, where she used to jump, said yesterday: "Having had the £100,000 payment has eased the situation, but there is still the outstanding amount to be settled."

The final amount has yet to be agreed. *Law Report, page 19*

Glazier says he trapped Soviet spies

By Richard Evans

A double-glazing salesman claimed yesterday that he was who helped to uncover the biggest band of Russian spies for a decade while working in the Soviet Trade delegation in Highgate, north London.

Mr William Graham, aged 45, said he pinpointed up to thirty Russians in the Highgate complex involved in subversive activity, and reported his findings to British intelligence chiefs.

He said that his work as a M16 "mole" resulted in the exposure of three Russians for spying activities, and predicted further expulsions. In an interview with *The Standard*, the London evening newspaper, Mr Graham said he infiltrated the complex over an 18-month period after a chance offer to reorganise the buildings in the trade delegation in late 1979.

Mr Graham claimed that his work led to the expulsion of three spies, Viktor Lazarev in 1981, Mr Anatoli Zotov last December, and Mr Vladimir Chernov earlier this year. In addition he said he uncovered a spy, code-named Charles, who had been operating in Britain for two years unknown to British security services.

He begged the trade delegation for M16 with a transmitting device about the size of a 10p piece, and also helped to get in touch with a Russian who was subsequently compromised by intelligence to work for Britain when he returned to Moscow.

Mr Graham, a former police informant, said he agreed to work for M16 "because I am loyal to my country."

The work began when he became friendly with a man he met in the Queen's Head public house, in Crouch End, north London. The stranger turned out to be a member of the Soviet trade delegation, who said there would be some double glazing work at the Highgate premises.

Mr Graham's firm, formerly Palace Installations of Hornsey, which is now in liquidation, was awarded the £46,000 contract.

He got in touch with his Special Branch contact before being introduced to an M16 controller. Mr Graham said he was given a code name, a special telephone number to ring and a flat to go to in case of trouble. It was there that he was debriefed three or four times a week after starting the job in January, 1980.

He claimed that a bugging device planted under the lectern in the delegation's concert hall had helped to expose Mr Lazarev, a second secretary at the Russian Embassy, who was expelled for attempting to recruit civil servants in government departments.

Aspinall is granted club licence

Mr John Aspinall was granted a gaming licence yesterday for the Curzon House Club, in Mayfair, London, after a three-day hearing by South Westminster Licensing Justices.

The casino, formerly owned by the Coral Leisure Group, lost its licence two years ago after the management was found using illegal methods to attract customers.

Mr Aspinall, aged 56, of Lyall Street, Belgrave, bought the club from the company. Five earlier applications failed because it was felt there were sufficient casinos in London.

Mr Aspinall agreed yesterday not to allow gambling at his other club, Aspinall's, in Knightsbridge, a small, exclusive casino for high-rolling gamblers, when the new club, to be called Aspinall Curzon, opens in eight months after renovations.

He also owns Houghton Zoo Park, near Canterbury, which he told the court was losing money.

Father is jailed for baby's death
James Hogan, aged 35, who smothered his son Ryan, aged eight months, with a cushion shortly before he was due to hand the child over to his estranged second wife, was jailed for 18 months yesterday at Preston Crown Court.

Hogan, a sales representative, of Irwell Vale, Rossendale, Lancashire, admitted manslaughter.

Mrs Hogan had secured an interim court order giving custody of the boy.

Robbery theory in desecration
Grave robbers may have taken several thousand pounds of jewellery thought to have been buried with the body of a woman at Theydon Bois, Essex. The local police have begun an investigation after the grave of Mrs Winifred De Maus, who died in 1978, was found uncovered on Wednesday.

Mrs De Maus died in her eighties. Yesterday police said they were trying to find a relative who lives on the Isle of Wight. A spokesman said it had been rumoured that Mrs De Maus had been buried with a quantity of jewellery.

RUC widow to marry double killer

By Richard Ford

The widow of a Royal Ulster Constabulary inspector murdered by the provisional IRA, is to marry a convicted double killer described by a judge as a "cold blooded and completely ruthless assassin".

Mrs Florence Cobb, aged 42, a mother of three, has become engaged to Kenneth McClinton, aged 36, a former member of the Ulster Defence Association. He has become a "born again Christian" while serving a life sentence in the Maze high-security prison, near Belfast.

The couple plan to marry when Mr McClinton, from the Shankill Road area of Belfast, completes his sentence in 1999, unless as Mrs Cobb says, "the Lord opens the prison gates sooner".

The couple first met after she appeared on a television programme and McClinton wrote to her saying he had become a "born again Christian". After several weeks she went to visit the man jailed in 1979 for the murder of a Roman Catholic and a Protestant.

Mrs Cobb, from Hillsborough, county Down, had earlier written to the man convicted of murdering her husband at security barriers in Lurgan, county Armagh, in 1977, forgiving him.

A "born again Christian" herself, Mrs Cobb said she believed McClinton was a truly sincere believer. Their relationship had developed since she



Mrs Cobb yesterday: Marrying "in 1999".

began visiting him in 1981 after he had sent her a visitation pass. She had forgiven him for what he had done and he was sorry for his actions and after giving his life to Christ had severed his connections with paramilitary groups.

Her fiancé had just returned to the Maze after undergoing skin graft operations after an attack by republican prisoners a few weeks ago in which he was wounded.

"He is not using his Christianity to try to get out of prison early. He sees the Maze as his mission field and we are both prepared to wait," she said.

Mrs Sheila Carville, widow of one of the men McClinton shot dead six years ago, said: "Last night he was 'pulling the wool over people's eyes' about his 'born again Christian' claims."

Better homes bring fewer complaints

By Baron Phillips, Property Correspondent

Britain's house builders are constructing better homes, of a higher standard, than they were 10 years ago. Since 1973 there has been a remarkable decline in the number of complaints about important structural defects in new homes.

An independent study by Duncan Fraser, a firm of accountants, shows that the number of serious defects in newly built private houses has been significantly reduced since 1973, when almost 10,000 claims under the National Homebuilders Council certificate scheme were received. Last year claims had fallen to 4,500.

Under the scheme, which guarantees the main structures of a house for 10 years, a total of £5m was paid out last year

for genuine complaints. Although no strictly comparable figure is available for 1973, £12m has been paid on claims arising on homes built between 1971 and 1973.

Most of the awards made last year relate to structural defects in homes built before 1974 and cover houses and flats which were constructed during the 1970-73 boom.

The council said yesterday that claims totalling only £4m had been met on homes built since 1975, although that generation of houses will continue to be at risk until early into the next decade.

Present certificate schemes run for the first 10 years of the life of a house but do not come into operation until a house has been bought. During the aftermath of the property collapse in the mid-1970s

many home on sites all around the country lay empty for years until the market picked up again.

During the first two years of occupancy a householder is normally responsible for any defects which become apparent. For the next eight years home owners are covered by the certificate.

The average size of a claim settled last year was £3,300. Most complaints were in two areas, roofing and badly laid foundations. They cost almost £3m, half the total claims, to put right.

But it is the report from the accountants that indicates the general improvement in building standards over the past 10 years. It states that the number of big structural problems occurring after seven years is down by half.

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Industrial action threat to Government's law and order policies

By Peter Evans, Home Affairs Correspondent

The Government faces moves this month to disrupt its law and order policies by industrial action that could seriously embarrass it, especially if there is a general election in June.

The National Association of Probation Officers (Napo) is calling on its members to refuse to recommit, supervise, or cooperate with two key provisions of the Criminal Justice Act, which is due to come into effect on May 24.

Further, prison officers at their annual conference later this month will be debating unilateral action to cut the prison population. The debate comes after a resolution at their conference two years ago to the effect that if by now the Government had not done enough to reduce overcrowding, the prison officers would do what was needed.

If they decide to act, the population would be reduced to the certified normal accommodation figure, the number prisons are officially supposed to hold.

Officers estimate that if a motion before the conference is passed the prison population will fall by about 3,500.

An official of the Prison Officers' Association said that last time the officers took action, in 1980, the Government introduced an emergency powers Act, opened two camps, and brought in troops to help with perimeter guard duties. The prison population is now 44,407, and 374 in police cells.

Canterbury Prison staff, who moved the original resolution, have a motion this month which says that, because the Government has not tried hard to reduce the over-crowding in

prisons the association should adopt a policy of keeping to the certified normal accommodation figure in all establishments from June 6.

The branch moved that the policy should remain in force until otherwise determined by a special delegate conference.

The effect would be to add immediately to the number of prisoners held in police cells not built for the purpose and to bring pressure to bear on Mr William Whitelaw, Home Secretary, to take emergency executive action to release some non-dangerous prisoners.

Mr Whitelaw is reluctant to take such action, as he made plain in his article in *The Times* yesterday. The article is seen by officers as implying that there is no need for further drastic action by them or anyone else because of the effort the Government is making to cut the prison population.

However, Mr Whitelaw's optimism conflicts with the opinion of Sir James Hennessy, his Chief Inspector of Prisons. He said in his annual report that prison overcrowding, which was already at a crisis point, was likely to worsen, with the population reaching almost 50,000 by the end of the decade. Five thousand new places are to be provided, but the pressure on the system is unlikely to ease, because some cells will go to make room for integral sanitation and others will be out of use during refurbishing.

If the prison officers do not think Mr Whitelaw's programme credible, the Government could be faced in the period before a possible general election with its much vaunted law and order programme, a priority for Conservatives,

under attack from its own agencies.

One of the provisions in the Criminal Justice Act which Napo is banning is the curfew order.

Under the order a juvenile can be instructed to remain at home or at a specified address for a maximum of 10 hours between 6pm and 6am for up to 30 days. The court must not include any such requirement, however, unless it has first consulted the supervisor about the feasibility of securing compliance.

Another key provision in the Act to be vetoed by officers allows courts to require under a supervision order that a juvenile should refrain from participating in certain activities for up to 90 days.

Napo regards curfews and the so-called "negative requirements" in supervision and probation orders as unworkable and a fundamental change in the officer's role.

Members have been urged to try to reach agreement with their chiefs to try to avoid any conflict with courts.

There is already evidence that one part of the Act is not being used. "Since the adult provisions of the Act came into force in January no Napo member has recommended a negative requirement and to my knowledge none has been imposed," Mr Harry Fletcher, assistant general secretary of Napo, said.

The negative requirements mean that an offender can be told not to do something, for example visit a public house. The probation officer's job then is to ensure that he or she complies.



Bridge on the River Foyle: About 200 yards of dual carriageway bridge section taking the air in Northern Ireland from a barge. The length of the bridge changes by an eighth of an inch for every degree C shift between rain and shine. (Photograph: John Dadson)

Labour in the Rhondda

Candidate for a lifetime

From Tim Jones, Cardiff

By tonight the clutch of solicitors, union officials and councillors bidding for the safest job in British politics will have been whittled down to a manageable number and, at most, only six prospective candidates will remain from whom the next Labour MP for the Rhondda will be chosen.

Barring a major scandal or a conversion of Lazarus-like proportions among the electorate, the successful man or woman will remain in Parliament for the rest of his or her working life, for the party enjoys in the valley a majority of 31,141.

Because of fears that Plaid Cymru would move the writ for the by-election, caused by the death of the former member, Mr Alec Jones, the original leisurely timetable was cut back after pressure from London and the final decision on the date will now be taken next week.

More than forty people wrote expressing their desire to stand but it is expected that by the time nominations close today, only 12 will have succeeded in obtaining the necessary nominations.

Several leading Labour

MPs, still searching for seats because the reorganization of constituency boundaries, have cast envious glances towards the valley but they are barred by convention from bidding.

Mr Harry Stonehouse, secretary of the Rhondda Constituency Labour Party, has admitted there is a preference in the valley for a local person to be chosen "although naturally we want the best candidate for the job."

Nevertheless, it appears likely that after the executive committee draws up a short list tonight, the only outsider still in the running will be Mr George Galloway, former chairman of the Labour Party in Scotland and now a full-time organizer in Dundee.

His two likeliest opponents will be two European MPs, Miss Ann Clwyd (Mid and West Wales) and the local man and favourite, Mr Allen Rogers (South East Wales).

Mr Rogers, an anti-market

fact that I am a Scot presents no problems. There are examples of people who have done the same thing." In fact one of them, Kair Hardy, became the first Labour MP when he won Merthyr and his secretary was Mr Stonehouse's grandfather.

Wisely, Mr Galloway says he is in favour of devolution in Scotland but not for Wales.

Only twice, in 1945 when the Communists failed by 972 votes to capture the seat and in 1967 when Plaid Cymru fell short by 3,000 votes, has the unbroken Labour lineage been remotely challenged.

The prospective Conservative candidate, Mr Peter Meyer, a knowledgeable and experienced county councillor, will not be too disheartened by the inevitability of defeat. In 1959 Mr Francis Pym was soundly thrashed there.

Rhondda contradicts Conservative ethos, which declares that home ownership is a factor in its favour, for most of the 76 per cent owner occupiers in the valley follow the 17.7 per cent who live in council houses and routinely reject the party.

Doubts on Sizewell safety

Two British and German nuclear engineering experts have criticized the design of the steel pressure vessel, the "heart" of the Central Electricity Generating Board's proposed Sizewell B Pressurized water reactor (PWR).

The criticism comes in evidence to the public inquiry now ending 15 weeks in session at the Snape Maltings, in Suffolk. The evidence was prepared for Suffolk County Council and Suffolk Coastal District Council by Dr David Leslie, professor of nuclear engineering at London University.

Professor Leslie told the hearing yesterday that he was "unconvinced by the board's choice of style of pressure vessel", citing an assessment of the safety and reliability of the vessel's design carried out by Dr Karl Kussmaul, director of West Germany's state materials testing laboratory and a member of the German reactor safety commission.

The inquiry was told that the experts' concern centered on the upper part of the pressure vessel, the nozzle and flange region, which both Professor Leslie and Dr Kussmaul claim should be forged as one unit.

Both the board and the National Nuclear Corporation, the part-government-owned corporation which acts as agent for the UK nuclear programme, claim that the use of such an integrated design is not feasible. Dr Kussmaul's evidence shows that German pressure vessel manufacturers have forged pressure vessels as one component as large as that planned at Sizewell. The inquiry continues today.

March for jobs gets into its stride

By Ronald Faux

The People's March for Jobs was in full stride yesterday, gaining momentum as it moved south through the Lake District.

The 70 marchers in bright yellow sweatshirts and waterproofs, banners waving in the wind, had already crossed Shap, which offers some of the highest and bleakest ground between Glasgow and London, and had just passed through Whitelaw land, an unspoiled Conservative territory dotted with comfortable farms and prosperous-looking country towns.

"Some people looked at us as though we had just stepped down from Mars, but generally folk understand", a young marcher, who is a redundant factory manager and former shop steward, said.

A mortgage technician, who had taken five weeks unpaid leave to join the march, said the police had been helpful and sympathetic, escorting the marchers on the daily 15-mile legs of the protest.

"They know exactly what the relationship is between unemployment and crime, and that with more work there would be less crime and violence for them to deal with, less for the extremists of any kind to promote themselves with", he said.

The march had been kept to a token number because of costs and logistics problems. It will swell from a number of smaller marches coming from elsewhere in the North-west, including Cumbria, Yorkshire, Liverpool, Newcastle and the West Country. It is planning to sweep into Trafalgar Square on June 5 for "the biggest protest demonstration against unemployment the country has ever seen".

There are no pinched faces or rank signs of distress among these latter-day Jarrow men and women. But the distress and deprivation these marchers complain about has a depressing edge.

Sophia Young, aged 22, from Glasgow, graduated at Aberdeen University a year ago with an MA in arts and social sciences, and has found only two jobs since as a part-time waitress and as a hairdresser.

"It is very depressing to be told 50 times 'Sorry but we have had 500 people or 200 graduates applying for this job'. This march is really the first constructive thing I have been able to do. It is comradeship, encouragement and knowing that you are not alone", she said.

The marchers insist that their blisters and sore legs are not being suffered for a political cause. They represent the left-wing activists who are apt to arrive ahead of the march distributing revolutionary literature.

Mr Alan Millington, chief

Union leader eases fears over finances

By Barrie Clement, Labour Reporter

Mr Clive Jenkins's 400,000-strong white-collar union, the Association of Scientific, Technical and Managerial Staffs (ASTMS), has moved to head off possible controversy over its finances.

Mr Jenkins, the general secretary, said yesterday the union's position had improved "quite dramatically" and that in any case its problems had been grossly exaggerated.

Several motions severely critical of the financial performance of ASTMS have been dropped from the final agenda of the union's annual conference, which starts in Bourne-mouth tomorrow.

National officers said that an internal investigation of the situation had satisfied the committee setting out the order of business of the conference and that it was decided there were more important issues to be debated.

Mr Jenkins said that a combined deficit on capital and current account of £875,000 in 1981 had been reduced to a deficiency of £3,000.

There was also an increase in the central political and general fund, from £7,955,000 to £9,340,000. Current and capital expenditure had decreased marginally to £7,320,000. Total net assets rose from £2.2m to £3.6m.

This financial performance had been fuelled by a 17 per cent increase in membership subscriptions through an increase in the fee from £2 a month to £2.50.

Assets had also been sold and 33 members of staff had accepted voluntary redundancy. An index-linked pay agreement with staff had also been replaced with a less expensive arrangement.

ASTMS has worked out a method of tempting organizations not affiliated to the Trades Union Congress into merging with it.

Instead of the traditional full-blooded amalgamation approach, which often frightens less militant bodies away, the union has developed a "trial marriage" scheme.

Smaller organizations are being invited to avail themselves of ASTMS facilities at a prearranged annual fee, without committing themselves to an eventual merger.

Mr Peter Kennedy, a national officer, said the union could offer research, educational and legal services, together with advice on health and safety.

Mr Jenkins estimates that his union could pick up as many as 100,000 extra members.

The union has already signed up the Guinness staff association in Dublin.

Bookies' dispute for High Court

By Rupert Morris

A dispute among bookmakers is to be resolved in the High Court today. At issue is the chairmanship of the levy board's bookmakers' committee, which helps to decide the annual rate of levy.

The Betting Office Licensees' Association (BOLA), which represents High Street betting shops, objects to the chairmanship of Mr Al Bruce, from the National Association of Bookmakers (NAB), which represents predominantly on-course bookmakers.

That view is supported by Mr William Whitelaw, the Home Secretary, who reconstituted the bookmakers' committee from last December to give the bodies equal representation. NAB had previously commanded a permanent majority on the committee.

BOLA has long argued that NAB should not have the main say in how the levy is fixed since only off-course bookmakers (BOLA members) pay the levy - equivalent to 1.1 per cent of their turnover, and expected to rise to £19m for the racing industry in this financial year.

But NAB has received legal advice that it may still be entitled to have Mr Bruce, with his vital casting vote, as chairman.

Ripper denial

Peter Sutcliffe, the Yorkshire Ripper, was not exorcized by Father Anthony Lawn while he was in Leeds prison awaiting trial, as stated in a newspaper, a Home Office minister said in a Commons written reply.

Mr Sutcliffe, a prominent

Visit by EEC delegates for trade barrier talks

By Our Parliamentary Staff

A delegation from the European Parliament will be in London on Tuesday and Wednesday for talks with ministers about the removal of non-tariff barriers to trade within the European Community.

A special meeting of the EEC Council of trade ministers has been called for May 26 and the European MPs want to be in a position to put some views to it. Meetings have been arranged next week with Sir Geoffrey Howe, Chancellor of the Exchequer, Mr Douglas Hurd, Minister of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, and Mr Nicholas Ridley, Financial Secretary to the Treasury.

The five European MPs coming to London will be led by Mr Jacques Moreau, the French socialist chairman of the European Parliament's economic and monetary committee. The British member of the quintet is Mr Basil de Ferranti (Hampshire, West), a prominent

Satellite TV group considers share offers

By Bill Johnston

Electronics Correspondent

The board of Satellite Television is to meet today to decide on the offers for a majority shareholding in the group.

News International, owners of *The Times*, *The Sunday Times*, *The News of the World* and *The Sun*, has made a bid for the shareholding but is in competition with another bidder, believed to be an electronics group.

The satellite service has been operating since 1981 using the European Orbital Test Satellite. The station has more than 400,000 viewers in Norway, Finland and Switzerland. From the summer, the station will be transmitted on the new European Communications Satellite which will be able to be received in Britain.

The project has cost the shareholders about £4m, so far, but a further £10m is needed.

Unqualified conveyancers 'a threat to the public'

By Frances Gibb, Legal Affairs Correspondent

The Law Society has launched another attack on non-qualified conveyancers in strongly worded document which sets out "why non-qualified conveyancers constitute a threat to the public interest".

It claims that in the past solicitors who have been struck off the roll for stealing clients' money have subsequently worked within unqualified conveyancing organizations, "thus exposing its customers to a risk which cannot be justified".

It names one non-lawyer conveyancer who, it says, has failed to pass the conveyancing paper of the solicitors' final examinations five times. "He now offers his services to the public as an unqualified conveyancer."

Another person cited in recent legal proceedings "has failed the conveyancing paper of the solicitors' final examination no fewer than 12 times".

The document, which has been sent to all local law societies, is aimed at putting the Law Society's case to the public, the media and MPs, for the present round of prosecutions it had brought against non-qualified conveyancers.

The prosecutions, the society says, are being brought as a matter of consumer protection. "For a member of the public to use an unqualified conveyancer is playing with fire."

Citing the unanimous conclusion of the Royal Commission on Legal Services in 1979 that a "free-for-all in conveyancing would not be in the public interest", the society lists four reasons why a solicitor should be preferred to a non-lawyer conveyancer.

Every solicitor, the society says, has received lengthy legal training in all branches of the law, offers the benefit of a compensation fund for dishonesty; has to observe a code of conduct so he cannot benefit from his client's innocence and carries compulsory insurance against negligence.

The society gives two examples of the dangers for clients of using non-lawyer conveyancers. In one, evidence was given in one of the recent Law Society prosecutions that a solicitor acting for the building society lending money to the conveyancer's customer had to redraft the transfer document. The unqualified conveyancer then thanked the solicitor for putting him right.

In another case contracts had been exchanged but not signed. The customer of the non-qualified conveyancer learned of new facts and wanted to withdraw from the transaction. His conveyancer failed to act quickly enough and the contract was signed by the other side, committing the customer to a binding contract with which he could not proceed.

The society accepts improvements can and have been made. Some solicitors, it says, would like to see advertising allowed by individual firms. "This is a change which does cause us concern. Because, however, of the public interest we have taken some small steps in that direction."

These include estimate forms for conveyancing charges which clients can ask solicitors to fill in. Clients are encouraged to shop around. Solicitors, it says, should be cheaper than non-qualified conveyancers.

Hunting the small fry in video piracy

By Kenneth Gosling

Pornographers are moving into the video-piracy market, turning it into one of the most profitable illegal industries, Mr Peter Duffy, a former Scotland Yard Commander, said yesterday.

He said: "The arrival of video was massive from heaven for them. At the top and we know what we are up against - there is not just one Mr Big but several fairly big. The difficulty is tracking down the people at the lower end of the scale."

Mr Duffy was recently appointed head of investigations for the new Federation Against Copyright Theft (Fact) and already has an efficient operations room set up in its offices in London's West End.

In another room are piled boxes and boxes of pirate videos, familiar names like *Gandhi* and *Tootsie* among them.

"One trade paper even voted ET the best cassette of the year even though it has never been officially released", Mr Duffy said. He thought there was a case for a significant appraisal by the cinema industry of its marketing tactics.

As a matter of policy it would not issue any video of its films. "But every feature film since we started last October has been copied, many of them very badly."



Peter Duffy: "People making big money."

of *The Missionary* with a very distorted and "stretched" image.

Mr Duffy said: "The man in the street will say there is no harm in a little bit of copying - it is known as time-shift. But people are making big money out of paying a few hundred pounds to a projectorist to get hold of a film for a few hours."

"The sad thing is people in Hollywood still say it is not policy to issue films in cassette form. Talk about putting your head in the sand."

Mr Duffy produced cassettes of *Seven Years and the Seven Dwarfs*, which has never been officially produced on video because it continues to be shown year after year in the cinema to fresh generations of children.

"These", he said, "are worth more than the Bank of England notes for £20 notes." Tracking down the pirates, using a network of private investigators and with the help

of the police and trading standards officers, is paying off - but at a price.

The operation is costing £750,000 a year, with contributions from film industry organizations ranging from £16,000 to £64,000. The former members of Fact were the British Videogram Association, the Motion Picture Association of America Incorporated, and the Society of Film Distributors.

Mr Robert Birch, Fact's director-general, is another ex-Yard man - formerly the Metropolitan Police solicitor - and his deputy, Mr William McCrorie, was the senior principal legal executive at the Yard. Mr Duffy once headed the anti-terrorist squad and worked in the murder squad and against company fraud.

Several gangs have already been broken and a number of cases are pending. In one copying centre equipment worth £250,000 was found.

Mr Birch said the change in the law increasing penalties for piracy and sale would switch the emphasis from lengthy and expensive civil proceedings to the criminal courts.

And those who handle the illegal cassettes will think again before risking prison sentences. "The fact is that you cannot have thieves without receivers and the dealers must realize this."

The seizure so far of 7,000 video cassettes worth more than £250,000 was, he said,

just the tip of the iceberg. There were two aspects to the problem: organized crime using dishonest methods to obtain a film, putting it on master tapes and flooding the market; and "back to back" copying, involving a dealer employing two machines - "and a bit of wire from Exchange and Mart".

The supply of blank tapes is also being studied. "We want information about any exceptional large order for tapes coming in from an unusual source," Mr Birch said.

The first big "crunch" in the Fact campaign will come in a fortnight when thousands of illegal cassettes will be crushed at a depot in Tottenham, north London.

The campaign itself will continue, aided, its leaders hope, by the speedy enactment into law of the Copyright Amendment Bill, promised a rapid passage through its remaining stages.

Prison suicide

Mr Michael Lamont, aged 29, of Cambridge Road, Kilburn, north-west London, accused of stealing an antique table from a Kilburn house, hanged himself in a Hampstead police cell with material torn from his shirt.

A verdict that he had taken his life while of disturbed mind was recorded at St Pancras Coroner's Court yesterday.

Environment policy plea to Britain

By David Nicholson-Lord

Leaders of the European conservation movement are to make a final appeal to Mr Tom King, the Secretary of State for the Environment, over Britain's blocking of a measure regarded as crucial to the development of a coherent EEC environment policy.

Mrs Margaret Sweeney, the Irish president of the European Environmental Bureau, is writing to Mr King asking him to abandon British resistance to the proposed directive on environmental impact assessment in time for next month's meeting of the EEC Council of Ministers. If he refuses, conservationists believe the directive may be lost.

The bureau is the main pan-European grouping of conservationists, representing more than sixty bodies in the 10 member states. Mr Robin Grove-White, its UK representative and director of the Council for the protection of Rural England, described the directive yesterday as "immensely important" and said the finger would point at Britain if it was dropped.

He added that environment ministers had allowed themselves to be dominated by

industrial interests, looking no further than the minor risk of delays to their projects, such as the construction of power stations, mineral developments and farming drainage.

The irony about Britain's blocking of the directive is that the approach it enshrines is in broad conformity with the best principles of British planning and would modify practices here very little compared with its effect on countries such as Greece, Italy or Belgium.

It has received the backing of the Town and Country Planning Association and the Royal Town Planning Institute.

Conservationists believe that the directive would provide for vetting of sensitive projects and lays down public consultation procedures, would place environmental policy at the heart of EEC decision-making. Increasingly controversial agricultural drainage projects could be better controlled, they argue.

Government opposition to the proposal, which has been discussed by the EEC for four years, originally centred on objections to more planning bureaucracy.

Recorders dearer

By a Staff Reporter

New quota restrictions and the fluctuation of the pound against the yen will mean increases in the next few weeks in the price of video recorders imported from Japan. Buyers will find that the previous lowest price of £299 will be up by about £100.

The increases are coupled with a warning from Mr William Fulton, managing director of Sony (UK), that supply will fail to keep pace with demand: he says the price of virtually all video recorders will be affected.

Under the terms of an agreement between the EEC and the Japanese Government a limit has been set at 4,550,000 a year, current estimates put the market size at 4,800,000,

although it is pointed out that it has not been widely understood that the figure of 4,550,000 is not a fixed quota.

The Japanese quota will probably come down to 3,500,000 and European manufacturers cannot make up the shortfall.

In the five or so years since video recorders started to appear the price has dropped from £700-£800 to machines offering better facilities for less than £300.

Under the terms of the agreement Philips and Grundig are able to take advantage of a guaranteed additional 1,200,000 allocation for locally produced machines. But a severe shortage of machines is being predicted.

PARLIAMENT May 5 1983

Soviet offer an attempt to delude public

NUCLEAR DEBATE

The British nuclear deterrent is already at the irreducible minimum as a strategic last-resort nuclear deterrent, to deter anyone who wished to attack Britain, Mrs Thatcher, the Prime Minister, said in the Commons.

She was questioned by several MPs about the Soviet wish to include British and French weapons in the negotiations over intermediate-range nuclear forces at Geneva.

Mrs Thatcher said that the British strategic weapon without including their own was an attempt to delude the British public which must not be misled that there was not a shadow of doubt that it was vital for Britain to retain the deterrent.

Sir Anthony Kershaw (Stroud, C) began by asking: Does the Prime Minister approve of the decision of the NATO to send two observers to the World Peace Council sponsored by the Soviet Union in Prague. Would they not do better to campaign against the missiles already deployed in eastern Europe and Russia?

Mrs Thatcher: I agree. A very much better way to get nuclear disarmament is to persuade the Soviet Union to negotiate in Geneva to get the weapons of both sides down.

Mr Michael Foot, Leader of the

Opposition: Will she look at the statement apparently made by her Government that it will object to any proposition for including the British nuclear force among the matters to be discussed at the INF talks at Geneva?

The Government should consider it ahead before she blocks it - a step which might cause serious wreckage of the disarmament conference.

Mrs Thatcher: The British and French nuclear deterrents cannot be included in the INF negotiations. Nor should they be. They are a strategic last resort deterrent. They are already the absolute minimum to deter and we cannot give away the absolute minimum without robbing this country of a very necessary part of our defence.

Mr Foot: We shall be debating this next week but is she saying there will be some other negotiations in which the British Government would be prepared to discuss the NATO nuclear deterrent as well?

Is it possible for those matters to be discussed at the Start talks if not at the INF talks, if that would help to the success?

Mrs Thatcher: The French and British nuclear deterrents are already the absolute minimum to deter and we cannot give away the absolute minimum without robbing this country of a very necessary part of our defence.

Mr Ray Jenkins, Leader of the SDP: Is it not clear, however, that Mr Andropov's limited but significant step forward appears to have been much more coolly received in London than in Washington or Paris headquarters? Would she be prepared to correct this impression?

Mrs Thatcher: The previous question referred only to one part of those proposals. The other part was that we should count the number of warheads rather than the number of missiles. That is what we have always wanted and it is to be welcomed.

The other parts are highly complex and must be considered very carefully before comment is made on them.

Mr William Pitt (Croydon, North-West, L): In view of the news about America this morning will she seek to encourage President Reagan to take the advice of his House of Representatives and support a nuclear freeze?

(Conservative shouts of "No")

Mrs Thatcher: No. To support a nuclear freeze would freeze in the superiority of the Soviet Union. I do not know whether that is Mr Pitt's policy but it is not that of this side.

Those who want genuine disarmament want reductions in nuclear weapons on both sides and a freeze would hinder that objective.

Strang: Concession to US

Mr Gavin Strang (Edinburgh, East, Lab): Mr Andropov's offer to count warheads and not just missiles is a significant Soviet concession to the United States and it is right to welcome it, but in view of her statement that the Government will continue to resist the long-standing Soviet proposal that British weapons be included, will she say in what circumstances, if any, the British Government is prepared to negotiate over our nuclear weapons?

Mrs Thatcher: It is totally wrong to suggest that our last resort strategic, submarine-based nuclear weapons should be included in talks about intermediate-range nuclear weapons. It is to be welcomed that the Soviet Union is prepared to negotiate over our nuclear weapons. It is not to be welcomed that the Soviet Union is prepared to negotiate over our nuclear weapons.

Nelson: Unilateralism

Mr Anthony Nelson (Chichester, C): Questions of the inclusion of the British nuclear deterrent in any negotiations about arms limitation will inevitably be tantamount to unilateral disarmament in that we would be largely doing away with the nuclear shield which is our ultimate guarantee of security, whereas the Soviet Union would still have a considerable arsenal capable of hitting this country.

Mrs Thatcher: I agree that to abandon our deterrent would be one-sided disarmament. The deterrent is the first and most important part of our defence.

Changes made to stop and search powers for police

POLICE BILL

Several changes were made early today to the provisions in the Police and Criminal Evidence Bill relating to the powers of the police to stop and search. The report stage of the Bill, which was adjourned at 1.37 am, resumes in the Commons on Monday.

Among the many Government amendments agreed to was one which Mr Patrick Mayhew, Minister of State, Home Office, said would have the effect of making it unlikely that people would be stopped and searched in their own gardens.

Another amendment, moved by Mr David Mallett, Under Secretary of State, Home Office, required that a police officer proposing to undertake a search should state his name and the police station to which he was attached.

Mr Peter Saps (West Bromwich, East, Lab), for the Opposition, said it would have been helpful if the

Government had required the officer to give his number to avoid confusion if two officers at the same station had the same name.

Mr Mayhew moved an amendment allowing an officer to use reasonable force if necessary to conduct a search or to detain a person or vehicle for the purpose of a search. Mr Saps said that had into the realm of subjective judgment by the officer concerned. Would an aggrieved motorist who might miss an interview and lose a job as a result of being stopped, be able to claim compensation if it was subsequently proved he was innocent?

Mr Mayhew said what was "improvable force" demanded upon the circumstances and the test to be applied was he degree of force which was necessary in the circumstances to permit the officer to carry out that which had been authorized.

Not to have that power would nullify the point of the power to stop and search because otherwise an officer would not be able to counter any resistance.

It had never been the law that someone lawfully stopped should be able to claim compensation though someone unlawfully stopped could do so.

Mr Eddow Griffiths (Bury St Edmunds, C) asked during the debate for an estimate of the increase in paper work which would have to be undertaken by the police as a result of the Bill and Mr Mallett said he would make such an estimate.

Mr Griffiths said the filing system the police would require would be much greater than ever before. Perhaps the new rooms where tape recordings would be taken, could be designed with extra bookshelves where the files could be kept.

Mr Ian Mikardo (Tower Hamlets, Bethnal Green and Bow, Lab) said the point should not be dismissed flippantly as it had been in the committee stage.

No one wanted to see skilled police officers unable to operate because they were spending their time as pen pushers. There ought to be proper management consideration of the consequences in terms of the paper work.

Prisoners might be moved

HOME OFFICE

Mr Whitelaw, the Home Secretary, said he had plans to move some prisoners in London to prisons outside the capital.

Answering a question about the size of the prison population, he said: Some of the wings of some of the local prisons are out of action because we are making improvements in maintenance which should have been done a long time ago. I have plans to make extra places available where we can move people within London prisons to prisons outside.

Dr Shirley Sumner, an Opposition spokesman on home affairs, (Hilfild, Lab): The key to the alternatives to prison imposed by the courts is the probation service. Yet in his article in *The Times* of today on prison overcrowding, he did not even mention the existence of the probation service, which was a regrettable omission.

The expected increase of only 155 probation officers next year will be totally inadequate if the prison population is to be significantly reduced.

Mr Whitelaw: I did make reference in that article to the use of non-custodial alternatives. This Government has done a great deal more for the probation service than our predecessors and last year a major numbers. She could not forget that.

Depriving public of police protection

The organizers of demonstrations and marches in London must accept their responsibilities and the possible dangers of taking police protection away from others, Mr William Whitelaw, the Home Secretary, said during questions in the Commons.

Mr Sydney Chapman (Barnet, Chipping Barnet, C) asked the Home Secretary what criteria he took into consideration when deciding whether or not to accede to any request to ban a march or demonstration in the Metropolis.

Mr Whitelaw: I have no power to ban demonstrations. As to marches, the Public Order Act 1936 provides that the Commissioner of the City Police may, subject to my consent, make an order banning all marches or any class of march, but only if he believes that his power to control under the Act will be insufficient to prevent marches occasioning serious public disorder.

In each case, I consider the commissioner's reasons for requesting his operational judgment. Beyond that, specific considerations may vary. But I always reach my decision on whether or not to

consent to a banning order on what I judge will be in the public interest.

Mr Chapman: Since last year over two hundred at a public police man hours were used in controlling demonstrations in the Metropolis alone, involving more than 100 officers. Would he seriously and sympathetically consider, if necessary, an extension to the Public Order Act so that the Metropolitan Police Commissioner can ask for re-routing or banning of a march or demonstration if he can show that the march or demonstration would be a serious and substantial danger to the public, or would it be a serious and substantial danger to the public, or would it be a serious and substantial danger to the public?

Mr Whitelaw: That does not come into the law at present which is related to various public disorders. Those who decide to exercise their

undoubted right to have marches or demonstrations have to recognize the responsibility they are taking and the danger of taking away from other people in the Metropolis the protection they want.

Mr Peter Saps, an Opposition spokesman on home affairs (West Bromwich, East, Lab): How many police officers were engaged in controlling the demonstration in Trafalgar Square the Sunday before last - organized by Lady Olga Metelidze and her upper and middle class friends in support of nuclear weapons. Has the Home Secretary any power to ban such a demonstration or to ban the use of the Metropolis for such a demonstration?

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£50,000 prize for joint bingo game

The Government was prepared in principle to accept the proposal by the bingo trade associations for a joint prize of £50,000, Mr David Mallett, Under Secretary of State, Home Office, said during questions on possible changes in the law on bingo clubs.

Mr Mallett, who said there had been a decline in attendance at bingo halls, added that details of how the games were to be played and controlled would be discussed by the Home Office and the Gaming Board with the associations.

Mr Ivan Lawrence (Barnet, C): There has been a decline of about 13 per cent in attendance at bingo halls in the last year and the existence of many is threatened. Over and above increasing the level of prize money allowed will he also consider removing some of the restrictions on advertising?

Mr Mallett: There has been a decline in bingo hall attendance. The Home Office is looking at ways in which we can work with the associations but it has to be compatible with our overall policy to see that the social and economic aspects of the industry are protected.

Mr Patrick Carmack (South West Staffordshire, C) asked if this meant the Government was encouraging gambling.

Mr Mallett: No, it is not. It has always been our view that there should not be encouragement to grow in gambling. But when attendance has declined and a reasonable proposal is put forward to allow the associations to attract some of the lost trade, it would be wrong and damaging to the interests of those enjoying bingo if we stood in the way of those proposals going forward.

Mr Michael Nesbitt (Havering, Romford, C): I would like him to send me bills to those people who organize and run demonstrations which have considerable difficulties - (Labour interruptions) - on all sides. If he would like me to send the bills, I would be pleased to do so.

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Making hotels pay more for TV rejected

Putting further burdens on hotels by making them pay a licence fee for each television set they had was not the answer to helping pensioners with their licence fees, Mr David Mallett, Under Secretary of State, Home Office, said during questions on concessionary licences for pensioners.

Mr Nicholas Winterstein (Macclesfield, C) said some local authorities appear to be abusing the system by appointing pensioners to take control of groups of dwellings so that more elderly people could take advantage of the cheap television licences. This was particularly true among Labour authorities.

Mr Mallett: It is not fair to the pensioners who are responsible for the expenditure, or to the elderly people who still are unable to get the benefit of these concessionary licences.

Mr Mallett: We recognize, as the last Government did, that the situation is anomalous. The difficulty is that it is impossible equitably to take away a concession from those who have it. It is not economically realistic to extend it to all pensioners, nor would that be justified.

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Stumbling over poll question

Mr Thatcher, the Prime Minister, once again refused in the Commons to be drawn on the subject of the election date, even though she was accused of putting party advantage before the country's good in deferring a decision until she had had a chance to analyse the local election results.

Her questioner on the subject, Mr Richard Mitchell (Southampton, Lab), said: "She is putting party advantage before the country's good in deferring a decision until she had had a chance to analyse the local election results."

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MOBILE HOMES

Under the Mobile Homes Bill, the Government sought to improve still further the protection to mobile home residents while not adversely affecting the interests of site owners, Mr George Young, Under Secretary of State for the Environment, said during the Bill's report stage.

He moved a series of new clauses and amendments to introduce an element of implied terms which guaranteed certain rights for mobile home residents which would further strengthen the protection provided by the Bill.

He said site owners would be required to provide residents with a written statement setting out both the implied terms and the express terms of the agreement between them.

The new approach would leave the site owners free to negotiate with their residents on a local basis those matters which ought to be decided locally, but which would be subject to the implied terms and details of residents' obligations.

Residents would be guaranteed security of tenure and the right to sell on site from the moment the Bill came into force.

This Bill would make a significant difference to the lives of a lot of people who lived on mobile home sites. Without these amendments it would have strengthened the residents' position in a number of ways, and with them it would improve on a way that would not adversely affect the interests of site owners.

We have striven (he said) to maintain a fair balance between the interests of site owners and residents. The Government has responded in a positive way to the arguments put to it.

Mr Edward Graham, an Opposition spokesman on the environment (Enfield, Edmonton, Lab), said the substantial improvements Labour had sought were contained in these new clauses and they were grateful.

Instead of being dependent on a written agreement, now even when there was a conflict between implied terms and the written agreement, the implied terms were the ones which would prevail.

The changes had been designed to deal with some recalcitrant site owners who might otherwise ignore their obligations under legislation.

The site owners had been well served by those who put their point of view and they had nothing to fear from this new legislation.

Mr Michael McNeil-Wilson (Newbury, C) said he welcomed the new clauses. They struck a fair balance between site owners and mobile home occupiers, although some mobile home residents' associations were concerned about how the Bill might work out in law.

For instance, an annual review of site fees would still be permitted and this was in practice likely to be an annual increase. There was no arbitration machinery other than the courts. There was no independent control over rent charges.

The National Mobile Home Residents' Association wondered why using the services of a local rent officer had not been considered.

He agreed broadly with this because the courts involved a lot of expense and put owners of mobile homes at some disadvantage.

Residents' associations felt they might have been included in the Bill as an authoritative body with which site owners could be expected to negotiate. They felt a bit neglected.

Mr Nicholas Lyell (Hemel Hempstead, C) also welcomed the

BETTER DEAL FOR RESIDENTS

Mobile home owners would have automatic security of tenure under the Bill as long as the site operator had control of the site. In most cases that meant indefinitely. Owners would have the right to sell their homes on site and no longer have to offer first refusal to the site operator. The maximum commission charged to them on a sale would be cut from 15 per cent to 10 per cent.

Mr Eddow Griffiths (Bury St Edmunds, C) said relationships between site owners and site operators. It would be wrong to suggest that the country was littered with mobile home residents doing battle with rapacious owners. But there were sometimes problems and he agreed the Bill had the right balance between the two interests.

The National Caravan Council, a responsible body, had suggested an alternative to the new clauses which the owner had offered the occupier an agreement and the occupier failed either to make an

agreement within six months of the offer or to decline the offer in writing. The occupier who failed to do so should be treated as accepted.

The case was conclusive for the adoption of this simple amendment rather than the complicated and possibly impracticable new clauses.

Mr Stephen Ross (Isle of Wight, L) said the new clauses were a great step forward, but there were still serious gaps. The first concerned the sanctions available to occupiers should the site owner not comply with the requirements of the clauses.

It was a pity that they had to go through the courts as this would deter people.

The Government's amendments did nothing to cut the cost of premium payments. The problem could be compared with the problem of key money in the house sector. If only the rent officer could have drawn in to deal with the situation.

Mr Iwan Stanbrook (Bromley, Orpington, C) said he welcomed the Bill and the Government's new clauses. The Bill represented a substantial improvement in the position of mobile home residents.

There would be many cases where both sides did not agree to an arbitrator and this could be a difficulty.

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Next week

The main business in the House of Commons next week will be: Monday: Police and Criminal Evidence Bill, completion of remaining stages.

Tuesday and Wednesday: Debate on defence and disarmament.

Thursday: Importation of Milk Bill, second reading; Opposed private Bill: Milford Haven Conservancy Bill, third reading; King's College London Bill, Standard Chartered Merchant Bank Bill, and Lloyd's Bank Bill, second reading.

Friday: Private members' Bill: National Audit Bill, remaining stages; Broadcasting of Parliament (Annual Review) Bill, committee.

The main business in the House of Lords will be: Monday: Energy Bill, third reading; County Courts (Penalties for Contempt) Bill, second reading; Disasters of Fish Bill, second reading.

Tuesday: Telecommunications Bill, committee, second day.

Wednesday: Debate on industrial production.

Thursday: Housing and Building Control Bill, report.

Friday: National Heritage Bill and Mobile Homes Bill, Commons amendments.

Kohl stands firm despite pressure from right

Solid, old-fashioned, long-winded and rather dull is how most Germans have judged Chancellor Kohl's declaration of his Government's policies for the next four years.

There is a general satisfaction in Christian Democratic circles that Dr Kohl did not make any noticeable concessions to the right, or allow the demands of his coalition partner, Herr Franz Josef Strauss, to have any visible effect on his policies.

And his determination to pursue a dialogue with the East while remaining firmly anchored in the Western alliance has met with overwhelming approval.

Most criticism was directed at the Government's social policies and plans for domestic reform. Herr Hans-Jochen Vogel, the Social Democratic leader, said Dr Kohl's programme was no solid basis for the next four years, and attempted to meet the challenges of today with the recipes of the 1950s.

Herr Vogel, however, promised that his party would support, would offer constructive opposition rather than

obstruction and would give full backing to West Germany's place in Nato.

But Herr Vogel refused specifically to endorse Nato's arms modernization programme, and said his party wanted to know whether the intermediate arms talks in Geneva could be combined with talks on strategic weapons and whether the British and French missiles could be included.

For CSU members, who appeared somewhat aggrieved that their demands had been sidestepped, Herr Theodor Aigel spoke at length on future relations with East Germany, which have been a main point of dispute within the coalition.

He called again for a tougher policy, denounced East German harassment of West German visitors and called on East Berlin to do more to encourage good neighbourly relations.

The Greens, who made their presence felt during the Chancellor's speech in protest at policy towards Nicaragua, opposed every aspect of the Government's policy. They called for an immediate halt to

plans to deploy the new Nato missiles, denounced American policy in Latin America, accused the Government of hypocrisy in criticizing Eastern Bloc, and gave notice that they would throw "all their strength and physical existence" into the fight against the weapons in the autumn.

The three-day debate, which began immediately after the Chancellor's speech, will deal largely with some of the complicated details of the fiscal reforms.

The Chancellor's performance has been described as lacking in brilliance - he is certainly no great orator - and plaudits. But against that are set his qualities of moderation, steadiness and political skill in playing down the divisions within his coalition.

Most commentators admitted that Herr Vogel showed greater incisiveness, self-confidence beginning as leader of the opposition. But the Chancellor was untroubled by criticism and appeared confident that his programme represents the broad consensus within his coalition and the line that won him the election in March.

A health spokesman said that 10 of the victims were reported

by local newspapers to have been hacked to death by other members of the sect after a religious rally in the southern Philippines, according to the Health Ministry.

The deaths occurred on Mindanao island in March at a convention organized by a sect called the Philippine Renewal Christian Missionaries Association of Mercy.

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Tactical victory for Republicans on nuclear freeze vote

From Nicholas Ashford, Washington

After 53 hours of contentious debate spread over the past two months, the House of Representatives finally passed a resolution late on Wednesday night calling for a "mutual and verifiable freeze and reductions in nuclear weapons" by the United States and the Soviet Union. The vote was 278 to 149.

However, the political impact of this resolution was considerably reduced by a Republican amendment, approved earlier in the evening, that would revoke the freeze if it was not followed by negotiated arms reductions within a reasonable, specified period of time.

The amendment represented a considerable tactical victory for the Republicans, as it saved President Reagan from suffering yet another setback on the freeze issue. A day earlier, America's Roman Catholic bishops had voted overwhelmingly to endorse a pastoral letter calling for a halt to the testing, production and deployment of new nuclear weapons.

Mr Robert Michel, the House Republican leader, described the amendment as a "Victory unthinkable only weeks ago." Mr Elliott Levitas, a Democrat who backed the amendment, said: "There must be reductions, or else the freeze thaws."

The freeze resolution is non-binding and is regarded as a symbolic expression of the rapidly-growing grass-roots sentiment against the nuclear arms race. This anti-nuclear sentiment was eloquently expressed in the Roman Catholic bishops' 150-page letter, entitled: *The Challenge of Peace: God's promise and our response*.

The freeze resolution now goes to the Republican-controlled Senate, where its fate is uncertain. Mr Reagan has said

he will veto the measure if it reaches the White House.

The Administration had lobbied strongly against the freeze because, it maintains, it would leave the Soviet Union in a position of nuclear superiority and would weaken the hand of American negotiators at the two sets of missile talks in Geneva.

Despite the watering down of the final version of the resolution, supporters in the House of the freeze seemed pleased with the outcome, dismissing the amendment as a "nuisance at best". Mr Thomas (Tip) O'Neill, the House Speaker, described the resolution as a "unique instance in the history of arms control," adding that it was a message from the American people to recognize that "the onrush of nuclear weapons must be stopped."

Congressmen confirmed that both the bishops' letter and the latest proposal for nuclear arms reductions by Mr Yuri Andropov, the Soviet leader, had had an impact on the vote.

The Administration's reaction to the pastoral letter has been deliberately low-key, even though it represents a direct challenge to the Administration's nuclear policies.

Mr Reagan said he had little quarrel with the letter, the full text of which he had not yet seen. "It really is a legitimate effort to do exactly what we are doing, and that is to try and find ways towards world peace."

Mr Edwin Meese, who is counsel to the President, described it as a tragedy that the superpowers had not agreed on common strategic objectives during the arms control talks.

— dubbed *Star Wars* technology when announced by the President six weeks ago — was not beyond the imagination.

The US would share such technology with the allies, thus ensuring "linkage" across the Atlantic, he said last night in the annual Lord Mountbatten Memorial Lecture. There was a "moral attractiveness" about placing the emphasis on defensive systems instead of on an endless accumulation of offensive weapons.

He said that the President was also trying to promote "early and genuine" progress in the Geneva talks on intermediate-range nuclear forces through his latest proposal for an interim agreement.

Mr Paul Nitze, the chief American negotiator, had told the Russians that the US would "substantially reduce" the number of cruise and Pershing 2 missiles which are due to be deployed in Western Europe from December, if the Soviet Union would cut the number of its own warheads to an equal, global ceiling.

The question which Mr Reagan was putting to the Russians was: "If not elimination, to what equal level are you willing to reduce?"

The US had perceived the need to apply imagination to the problems posed by the arms race in Europe. "We are hopeful that the Soviet leadership understands our emphasis on the ultimate goal of removing an entire class of nuclear weapons. An interim agreement should not simply be a resting place before the next crescendo in the arms race."

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Leading article, page 11



Across the Bamboo Curtain: Soldiers standing guard outside the perimeter fence at Chuncheon military base (above) after the hijack of the Chinese Trident to South Korea. Below, a crew member watches from one of the aircraft's windows.

Chinese jet hijack triggers invasion alert in S Korea

From Jacqueline Raditt, Seoul

A hijacked Chinese airliner with 105 people on board triggered an invasion alert yesterday when it flew across Communist North Korea and the demilitarized zone and landed in South Korea.

The aircraft landed at a US airbase at Chuncheon, 45 miles north-east of Seoul and 30 miles south of the demilitarized zone that separates North and South Korea.

Two wounded crew members who had been shot in the hijacking, were taken off the aircraft on stretchers and transferred to hospital. The passengers and other crew were allowed to leave the aircraft and were taken to a hotel in Chuncheon seven hours after landing.

The China State Airlines plane was a British-built Trident on a scheduled flight from Shenyang in Manchuria to Shanghai. Three of the passengers were Japanese, the rest Chinese.

Residents of Seoul realized there was an emergency when, only minutes before the air-

craft landed, radio programmes on all channels were interrupted by an air raid warning.

Civil Defence headquarters announced that an enemy attack was imminent and warned that the raid was a real one, not an exercise. About three minutes later, however, the spokesman cancelled the warning without further explanation, and a three-hour news blackout followed before the Defence Ministry announced the landing of the airliner.

The pilot entered South Korean air space just before 2pm local time (Sam GMT) and signalled to a South Korean Air Force patrol aircraft that he wanted to defect.

The aircraft was shown on South Korean television, its passengers looking out of the windows and fanning themselves. Its wheels ploughed into the grass off the runway. Pictures showed US and South Korean soldiers passing food and soft drinks on board.

A television reporter said

the pilot had immediately asked to see the Taiwanese Ambassador and it was reported that two members of the Taiwanese Embassy in Seoul had gone to the airfield.

There was little reaction in Seoul to the air raid warning, as most offices and shops were closed and many people were out of town or visiting pleasure parks to celebrate Children's Day.

In February this year, a North Korean Air Force

captain, Li Ung-Pyong, aged 28, defected to South Korea in his Chinese-built MIG 19 and a 25-year-old Chinese pilot defected from mainland China, also in a MIG 19, to South Korea last October and later went to Taiwan.

In Taipei, a Taiwanese Foreign Ministry official said "all genuine freedom seekers" would be welcomed in Taiwan. It was the first successful attempt to hijack a Chinese commercial aircraft.

Paris keeps spy arrest secret

From Diana Geddes, Paris

Five Frenchmen suspected of having passed secrets to Russian agents were arrested by French intelligence officers shortly before the expulsion from France on April 5 of 47 alleged Soviet spies.

Three were later released after questioning, but two are still in custody, charged with working for a foreign power.

M. Patrick Guenier, aged 25, an architect with a precision engineering firm, is suspected of having given photocopies of confidential plans belonging to the firm to a commercial attaché at the Russian Embassy in Paris. His arrest in Meaux, just outside of Paris, at the end of March was made public at the time and is not considered of great importance.

The arrest of M. Juge (his first name is not known), an engineer and inventor, aged 57,

has been kept secret, however. He was apparently caught red-handed as he was passing important secrets in the Bois d'Arcy on the outskirts of Paris to a Russian "contact" at the Russian trade mission in Paris.

Although these arrests did not lead directly to the expulsion of the alleged Soviet spies, the documents involved are understood to have featured in the dossier compiled by French intelligence against the 47 Russian diplomats and other officials, who included M. Eugene Mouchine, the chief press attaché at the Russian Embassy, three Russians working for the Unesco secretariat in Paris, and a number of the official Russian delegation to Unesco.

So far no reprisals have been taken against the French by the Russians.

Rumasa's former owner fails to appear in court

From Richard Wigg, Madrid

Señor Jose Maria Ruiz Mateos, the former owner of the Rumasa business empire expropriated in February by the Spanish Government, failed to appear in court here yesterday to answer an investigating magistrate's summons.

Since shortly after the takeover ordered by the Gonzalez Government to avoid a crash which would have threatened the Spanish banking system, Señor Ruiz Mateos, aged 52, has been staying in London.

The judge, Señor Luis Larga, who is inquiring into alleged

fraud of money abroad, and non-payment of taxes and social security contributions, declined government lawyers' demands for a warrant for the immediate arrest of Señor Ruiz Mateos.

Instead he ordered him to appear in court next Tuesday, granting him a second chance to show that he was not seeking to pervert the course of justice.

The judge said that lawyers for Señor Ruiz Mateos, who has denied the charges several times through the press, had not given sufficient reason for his non-appearance.

Rome envoy recalled by Argentina

From Our Own Correspondent, Rome

Argentina has recalled its Ambassador to Italy amid the deepening crisis between the two countries over the hundreds of Italians among the thousands of "disappeared ones" declared dead by the Argentine Government last week.

The Argentine Embassy said that Señor Rodolfo Luchetta had been recalled "indefinitely" for consultations on the crisis.

The Italian Foreign Ministry said no decision had been taken on a possible recall of Señor Sergio Kocianich, the Italian Ambassador in Buenos Aires.

A memorandum from Señor Kocianich asking for information about the fate of 407 Italians and people of Italian descent has been roughly rejected by the Argentine Foreign Ministry and called "unacceptable and such as to represent interference in the internal affairs of Argentina."

The sharp increase in tension came after a scathing attack at the weekend by President Perón on Argentina's military regime.

THE HAGUE: A former Argentine police official has claimed that some civilians who disappeared during Argentina's "dirty war" are still in government-run concentration camps, and that the political disappearances are continuing, AP reports.

The Argentine military junta still keeps political prisoners in secret. Señor Rodolfo Fernandez said, contradicting the junta's "final document on the war against subversion and terrorism" issued last week.

Soviet links with Iran at new low

From Our Own Correspondent, Moscow

Moscow (Reuters) — Iran's expulsion of 18 Soviet diplomats and its move against the Tudeh (Communist) Party mark the collapse of Moscow's efforts to build a working relationship with the revolutionary leaders of its southern neighbour.

Western diplomats in Moscow said the decision to expel the envoys amounted on Wednesday, brought Soviet-Iranian ties to their lowest level since the 1979 Islamic revolution and most predicted that relations would not easily recover.

"This move will not have surprised Moscow, but the Kremlin will deeply regret what amounts to a final affirmation of complete failure in its policy towards Iran," one Western analyst of Middle Eastern affairs said.

After the radical Muslim leadership took control in Tehran in 1979, the Soviet Union repeatedly expressed support for the Islamic revolution and offered political cooperation and increased trade.

The ruling Iranian clergy remained cool towards Moscow's wooing even at the height of its confrontation with the United States over the detention of American hostages in the US Embassy in Tehran.

On the Soviet side, there were occasional signs of anger with Tehran, especially when the Soviet mission there came under attack from Afghan students, and evidence of differences within the Moscow party leadership over how to approach the Iranian Government.

The over three years, Moscow kept up its overtures. Only in the past few months did disenchantment become noticeable as the first sharp press attacks on the course of the Iranian revolution appeared.

The Soviet media has so far remained silent on both the decision to expel the diplomats, who were accused of interfering in internal affairs, and the banning of the Tudeh Party.

The move against the party, which was proscribed under the Shah, followed a televised confession from Tudeh leader Mr Nureddin Kianuri that he had spied for Moscow.

Moscow has also made no mention of this, although Iranian last month attacked the Iranian authorities for arresting Mr Kianuri, saying charges that he was a Soviet agent were baseless.

Western diplomats predicted the Soviet leadership would not retaliate against the expulsions and was likely to issue no more than a sharp commentary on the treatment of the Tudeh Party.

Leading article, page 11

Divers join hunt for submarines

Stockholm — The Swedish Navy yesterday continued its hunt for at least two suspected Soviet midget submarines off its east coast, Christopher Mosey writes.

Two depth charges were dropped and divers sent down into the bay near the industrial town of Sundsvall where two mines were detonated on Wednesday night. The Navy said it could not release news of its findings.

Major Bengt Sjöholm, the Defence Ministry spokesman, said it was "highly unlikely" that the submarine had escaped the explosion unscathed. He refused to comment on the possibility of it having been sunk.

Chernenko has pneumonia

Moscow (AP) — Mr Konstantin Chernenko, believed to have been the main rival of Mr Yuri Andropov, the Soviet leader, in the leadership contest, has pneumonia, his office said yesterday, confirming accounts about his health given earlier by other Soviet sources.

Mr Chernenko who is 71, has not been seen in public for more than a month, missing four important party gatherings and prompting speculation about his status. He was recently absent from May Day celebrations in Red Square.

Women admit killing Saudi

Geneva (AP) — Two Swiss women aged 19 and 25 have claimed responsibility for the savage killing of a Saudi diplomat, aged 51, whose sexually mutilated body was found in a Geneva hotel on March 10.

It looked like an act of revenge "given the nature of the injuries," said the investigating magistrates. The victim, whose name was withheld, had rented a flat at the hotel since mid-1981. He was a cultural attaché with the Saudi mission at the United Nations.

A-plant leak is plugged

Brussels — The nuclear power plant at Tihange on the Meuse resumed normal working after a 10-day break for repairs to a pump. A small amount of slightly radioactive water which leaked through the pump was all collected and stored. Intercom, the company running the plant, said. None of it escaped from the plant.

Jumbo loss

Hattiesburg (AP) — Ever since Gracie the goat disappeared from Kasper Park Zoo in the floods that engulfed Mississippi areas last month, Baber signs have been posted and a \$100 reward is now offered for the return of Gracie, a frisky, fragile and looking every one of her 15 years.

ETA's murders

Madrid — The military wing of the extreme leftwing organization ETA claimed responsibility for the murders in Bilbao of a police corporal, his pregnant wife and a police lieutenant. The military wing also seriously wounded another policeman with machine gun fire at Guernica.

Barrel coffins

San Francisco (AP) — The decomposed bodies of a black man and two white women were found inside two cement-sealed steel barrels deposited on Tuesday night in Golden Gate Park. The women were in one barrel, the man in the other.

Ethiopia call-up

Addis Ababa (Reuters) — Ethiopia, whose professional army is thought to be the largest in black Africa, has introduced compulsory military service for men between 16 and 30. Six months' training will be followed by two years in the Army, police or border guard.

Freedom leap

Paris (AP) — An engineer returning home from Cuba to Prague jumped from the airliner during its stopover at Orly, breaking a leg in doing so. The pilot asked to go to Canada. The pilot demanded he be put back on board but the airport officials refused.

All perish

Bangkok (AP) — All 31 people on a Thai Air Force C130 turboprop transport were killed when it crashed while landing at the Takli air base. Most of the victims were mechanics being switched from another base.

Pigs ahoy

Apia, Western Samoa (Reuters) — About 300 pigs living on Fakaofo atoll in the Tokelau Islands of the South Pacific have learnt to swim and fish, living on a diet of seaweed, small molluscs and fish.

City dug up

Moscow (AP) — Archaeologists have discovered what they think is the ancient city of Shahr-i-Shah under the Kimryum desert in Soviet Uzbekistan, Tass reports.

Crucial day for Shultz shuttle

From Christopher Walker, Jerusalem

The personal reputation of Mr George Shultz, the Secretary of State, as well as the standing of American foreign policy in the Middle East hangs on the outcome of an emergency session of the Israeli coalition Cabinet due to begin this morning.

The meeting has been convened by Mr Menachem Begin, the Prime Minister, to decide Israel's reaction to the lengthy draft agreement between Israel and Lebanon which Mr Shultz has hammered out during his hectic maiden shuttle mission to the region.

It is generally recognized that there can be no chance of America pressing forward with plans for a wider Middle East framework until all foreign armies can be persuaded to leave Lebanese soil.

Despite official American optimism that the agreement will be clinched by the time Mr Shultz leaves for Damascus tomorrow for the more difficult second leg of his trip to secure Syrian acquiescence, Israeli officials maintained the suspense throughout yesterday with a lengthy series of meetings designed to secure "clarification".

By last night, it became clear that one of the central issues on which the Cabinet will have to decide is the role of the Israeli-backed Lebanese militia leader, Major Saad Haddad. There were indications that ministers would be asked to change their original demand that he be appointed overall military commander of southern Lebanon.

There were predictions that the Cabinet session may include an attempt by Mr Ariel Sharon, the former Defence Minister and chief architect of the Lebanon war, to ensure that Israel does not agree to concessions in the security field. He is likely to be out-voted by supporters of his successor, Mr Moshe Arens.

It is understood that two of the key issues, the role of Major Haddad and the future of United Nations forces in southern Lebanon will be covered in separate letters of understanding, rather than the main body of the agreement.



New President sworn in

Mr Chaim Herzog, the popular former Labour Party politician, journalist, and ex-head of military intelligence, who was formally sworn in as the sixth President of Israel in the Knesset last night. He succeeds Mr Yitzhak Navon, who has yet to take a final decision whether he will return to political life.

The election of Mr Herzog, who was born in Belfast and is the son of a former Chief Rabbi of Ireland, provided a serious political setback to the ruling coalition of Mr Menachem Begin, the Prime Minister, whose own little-known candidate was beat in a Knesset vote.

Mr Herzog, who is 64, has pledged to try to heal the divisions in Israeli society.

Bishops call again for amnesty

From Roger Boyes, Warsaw

The Polish Catholic Church issued a fresh appeal yesterday to the Government to lift martial law, free political prisoners and release sacked Solidarity activists in connection with the Pope's visit to Poland next month.

The call came in a communiqué after a two-day meeting of Poland's bishops in Cracow, which was dominated by the subject of the papal visit. There is considerable tension in church-state relations despite Government's statements to the contrary exacerbated by the past week of demonstrations and clashes.

Many of the protests began after the celebration of Mass, despite official warnings that the church should distance itself from social unrest. A mysterious break-in into a Franciscan convent in Warsaw by an organized group of young men in plain clothes believed by church activists to be security police has added a new source of irritation.

The bishops did not mention these problems in their communiqué but church sources made clear that they will be raised in the next meeting of the joint Church-State Commission. The call for an amnesty echoes the sentiment voiced recently in a private letter from the Pope to the Polish head of state, Professor Jablonski.

It is evident both from the phrasing of the communiqué and from other church declarations that the freeing of political prisoners or the lifting of martial law are not strict preconditions of the papal visit. The Government has already stated that the present process of granting clemency to individuals is sufficient and that the granting of a general amnesty would be premature.

The church leadership is trying to avert a situation similar to that which occurred last December when martial law was suspended but simultaneously the penal code was tightened.

Pretoria unveils long-awaited reforms

From Michael Hornsby, Johannesburg

The South African Government yesterday unveiled its long-awaited constitutional reforms, which if put into effect would give the country its first multiracial parliament, but keep ultimate control in white hands through the office of a new and powerful executive presidency.

The reforms of the Republic of South Africa Bill 1983, were placed before Parliament by Mr Chris Heunis, the Minister of Constitutional Development, and immediately opposed by the far-right Conservative Party, which broke away from the ruling National Party last year.

The liberal Progressive Federal Party which considers the reforms grossly inadequate because they exclude black Africans, said it would not oppose the Bill at this stage. The first major test of white reaction will come next week in four crucial by-elections in the Transvaal.

The Bill provides for a new

parliament divided into three houses, one each for the country's 4.6 million whites, 2.7 million mixed-blood Coloureds and 850,000 Asians (almost all Indians). Each house would be elected on a separate voters' role. The 21 million Africans would remain unrepresented.

The parliament would have a total of 308 members. The existing House of Assembly, with its 178 members, would become the white house. To this would be added a House of Representatives of 85 members for Coloureds and a House of Deputies of 45 members for Asians.

The new president, who would combine the ceremonial and executive functions presently exercised by the state President and the Prime Minister, would be chosen by the majority vote of an electoral college composed of 50 whites, 25 coloureds and 15 Asians.

Each house, again by majority vote, would nominate

delegates from among its own members to fill these quotas. This means that so long as it retained a majority in the white house, the National Party would control the election of the President.

The Bill gives very wide powers to the President. He would initiate and have the final say on legislation, appoint ministers and could dissolve and summon Parliament at will. He could only be removed if all three houses separately passed a vote of no-confidence.

The President would also have a crucial role in resolving deadlocks when the three houses cannot agree on legislation, and in determining whether legislation comes under the heading of "general affairs" or "own affairs".

The new constitution lists social welfare, education, housing, health, agriculture, arts, culture and recreation as largely being "own affairs" — i.e. matters on which each house

would legislate separately for its own race group.

All other matters are considered to be "general affairs" and would have to be approved by a majority in each house. The parliament would never vote jointly on anything, so it would not be possible for an alliance to be formed across the colour lines to outvote the majority group in the White House.

It is acknowledged, however, that there would be grey areas between "general" and "own" affairs, and the President would decide in these cases. It is far from clear, for example, whether matters affecting Africans would continue to be solely a white concern or become a "general" matter.

If the houses cannot agree on a "general" matter, the President can himself submit a new version of the offending legislation, or ask the President's Council for a ruling.

Lesotho Cabinet opposes chief's tour to the east

From Our Own Correspondent, Johannesburg

Chief Leabua Jonathan, the Prime Minister of Lesotho, the Commonwealth enclave surrounded by South African territory, leaves today on a visit to Beijing, North Korea, Yugoslavia, Romania and Bulgaria.

He is expected to hold discussions on the establishment of full diplomatic relations with the five communist countries.

Sources said that the tour had been strongly opposed by the Lesotho Cabinet. The Prime Minister has been warned that the Lesotho Liberation Army, the militant wing of the opposition Basuto Congress Party, which he outlawed in 1970, could be expected "fully to exploit" his absence.

Pretoria, too, is viewing Chief Jonathan's travel plans with concern.

Princess braves modern perils of the turbulent Khyber Pass

From Michael Hamlyn, Landi Kotal, North-West Frontier Province

The arrest of the drug king of the Khyber 10 days ago cleared the way for the visit of Princess Anne yesterday to the mountainous pass leading to Afghanistan.

She was the first distinguished visitor to be allowed here for six months ever since Mr William French Smith, the American Attorney-General, had an uncomfortable time when he arrived in the streets of the town in search of drug factories.

Not until the Princess's visit was actually under way was it finally decided that the pass was safe enough to allow her to drive up here. A visit to a dam and hydro-electric project had been planned as an alternative. Even so, she was not allowed to go within less than six miles of the border.

After Mr French Smith's visit, the Pakistan authorities agreed with the elders of the two principal tribal groups in the pass to clamp down on the drug trade, which had developed so fast that the Khyber had taken the place of the Golden Triangle in South-East Asia as the drug capital of the world.

Twenty-seven drug processing plants were closed down, but the elders of one tribe were not able to control their young men and six new plants were soon opened up. Bullets flew in the valleys over the rivalry that followed. Shaikh Jumar, aged 35, owned four of the new stills.

According to Mr Jahanzeb Khan, the Commissioner for Peshawar, Shaikh Jumar was buying opium in Afghanistan, processing it in the Khyber valleys, and shipping it to the US and Europe. The British authorities say the 80 per cent heroin on the streets of London comes from Pakistan.

Shaikh Jumar was arrested in Landi Kotal by the Pakistan authorities who used a ruse, which they will not disclose, to trap him. "We might want to use the trick again," said Mr Khan, "so we cannot reveal how we did it."

With Shaikh Jumar behind bars in Peshawar sentenced by a military tribunal to three years in jail - "I favour a public flogging for him, as an example to others," said Mr Khan - the pass exploded into rioting. The tribal elders were warned again that the Pakistan authorities would react with the utmost vigour if the disturbances did not stop, and an uneasy calm had now descended.

According to Mr Shaheed Durrani, the Khyber political agent, Shaikh Jumar has caused the authorities more trouble than any other single individual. "He has caused all over the world," he said, "I call this man the heroin king."

So, instead of a traditional drive past this teeming town, and a visit to a spectacular viewpoint, where visitors can look down to the valleys and

dark gorges that the Mujahidin and drug smugglers use in and out of the Soviet-occupied country, the Princess had to be content with the bleak grandeur of the drive along the Khyber Rifles here. She halted at the insignia of British regiments carved into the hillside, and kept ever freshly painted.

She swept past the reassuring sight of a policeman, draped in bandoliers, and agreed to the teeth standing every few hundred yards along the rocky way. To be fair, though, most of the male inhabitants of these parts were also walking around equally draped.

She was treated to a military occasion which might not have seemed out of place at Camberley. She had lunch in the officers' mess, sat afterwards on the lawn under the shade of a walnut tree for a display of dancing, and then sat formally for a regimental photograph. A pipe band greeted her, playing an immaculate "Scotland the Brave", and sped her on her way with "For She's a Jolly Good Fellow".

Her meal consisted of curried lamb, and bread baked on hot stones. She was presented with garlands of flowers and tinsel, and the dancing involved much whirling about and waving of swords. The Princess rejoined the Andover of the Queen's Flight last night to return home.



Mitterrand defends Vietnam policy

President Mitterrand of France with Mr Deng Xiaoping, China's elder statesman (left), during talks in Peking yesterday. Mr Deng greeted reporters with a "Bonjour" and said France could put pressure on Vietnam to withdraw from Cambodia. Mitterrand had earlier defended France's relationship with Vietnam and its refusal to grant recognition to

the coalition of forces fighting for a Vietnamese withdrawal, David Bonavia writes.

He told a press conference on Wednesday that was anxious that Vietnamese troops should leave Cambodia, and that the country should achieve self-determination and neutrality through free elections. But "the coalition does not exercise enough

pressure on Vietnam, I am afraid of a return to the previous methods."

Mitterrand and Mr Deng had wide-ranging talks on multilateral and bilateral affairs. Mitterrand also met Mr Zhao Ziyang, the Prime Minister. The President emphasized France's advanced technology, which could, he said, be put to use in the development of China's economy.

Nakasone defends free trade record

From David Watts, Singapore

Mr Yasuhiro Nakasone, the Japanese Prime Minister, yesterday headed off any potential criticism of Japan at the forthcoming Williamsburg economic summit with a strong presentation of his country's role as a defender of free trade.

After his criticisms of protectionism in the West on the opening day of his visit to Singapore, Mr Nakasone said that no other country in the world had done as much as Japan to open up its domestic markets over the past two years.

Tokyo, he said, had made four successive moves to open its domestic market and cited the 50 per cent increase in quotas for imported industrial products under the generalized system of preferences which is the principal gift to Asean which he has brought on his first visit to the South-East Asia region. Japan had promised to present the views of less developed countries at Williamsburg.

Under the General Agreement of Tariffs and Trade (GATT), Japan's residual import tariffs were now lower than some European countries, especially on agricultural products and Japan's low level of import tariffs on industrial goods now led the world.

Mr Nakasone said average tariff levels on imported industrial goods were about five per cent in the EEC, four plus per cent in the United States and about three per cent for Japan.

Things were moving too on the non-tariff barrier front, according to the Prime Minister, who said he had initiated revision of 18 existing laws which would simplify imports.

Japanese largesse has been parsimonious by its standard of aid to other Asean countries towards Singapore has the greatest wealth per capita, and more importantly, the leading economic problem between the two countries is likely to mean further expensive outlay for Japan.

The problem is over-support for the big petrochemical complex which is being built in Singapore with Japanese Government loans as a joint venture with Sumitomo Chemical. The complex should have been in production a year ago, but the world market for petrochemicals long since collapsed and the Japanese side is in no hurry to start production which can only mean even greater losses when taken on top of the debt servicing already required.

Chamberlain returns to Darwin jail

From Tony Dubondin, Melbourne

Mrs Lindy Chamberlain, convicted of the murder of her baby daughter, Azaria, is likely to wait until the end of June before she will know whether her plea to seek special leave to appeal to the High Court of Australia has been granted.

She will spend that time in Darwin's Berrimah jail where she was moved on Wednesday from Mulawa jail. She had been held there since last Friday after her appeal against her conviction of the murder of her 10-week-old daughter at Ayers Rock in August, 1980, was unanimously rejected.

Mrs Chamberlain was released on bail last November for the birth of her daughter Kahliia.

Britain's contribution to Europe may be cut by 10 per cent

From Ian Murray, Brussels

Agriculture would receive less and less from an enlarged budget for the European Community under plans announced yesterday by the European Commission.

If adopted in its present form, this scheme could have the effect of reducing Britain's contribution to the Community by around 10 per cent in the short term.

The Commission believes that the long-term impact of the new system would be to develop new policies in non-agricultural areas which would directly benefit Britain.

Once the new system was working there would be no need for rebates to Britain. But until then the Commission believes special measures will be necessary to satisfy British demands for a more fair and balanced budget. Any agreed rebates, however, will have to take into account the view that Britain received "too much" money back over the past three years.

The plans are meant to provide a whole new approach to the financing of the Community, replacing the present method of raising money which dates back to April 1970, and which is incapable of providing the budget with all the cash now needed.

The liquidity crisis has come about essentially because agricultural spending is so large that there is not enough money left to finance projects which could tackle the most important problems facing the Community: unemployment and industrial decline.

Britain as an industrial nation has suffered worse than any other country from its imbalance and its insistent pressure for a fairer system has forced the pace for reform.

Although urgently needed if the Community is to avoid going bankrupt, the new project is at best not going to be agreed until the Commission is preparing its draft budget for 1985 in a year's time.

This is because an essential element of the project involves raising the present ceiling on value-added tax revenues above the level agreed in 1970. This in turn means that the changes would need ratification by the Parliament of every member state - a long process after a long and difficult negotiation in the Council of Ministers which

would itself have to agree unanimously a new package.

The Commission proposes ways of cutting back agricultural spending and raising any extra money needed to fund farm prices by new mechanisms.

This would leave a larger part of the existing budget free for other purposes. To this would be added the extra money from value-added tax revenues.

In very broad terms this would mean that the agricultural share of the budget would drop from its present level of around two-thirds of all available money to about a quarter.

The main points of the proposals are: ● Agriculture: Only 33 per cent of the total budget to be used on supporting CAP. Extra CAP money to be raised according to three indicators -

agricultural production; gross domestic product per head of population; and the amount each country contributes to the net operating surplus of the Community.

● Value-added tax: Member states would have to pay up to 1.4 per cent of their VAT revenue instead of the present 1 per cent. This increase would have to be approved by national parliaments, but future increases of 0.4 per cent could be approved by unanimous approval of the council and a three-fifths majority of the European Parliament.

● Energy: The Commission is working on a big overall energy programme and reserves the right to propose a tax based on "non-industrial consumption" during the next few months.

Hu arrives in Romania to patch relations

Bucharest (AP) - Mr Hu Yaobang, the Chinese Communist Party leader, arrived here on an official visit that signalled a Chinese diplomatic offensive in Eastern Europe.

President Ceausescu of Romania greeted his guest with two ceremonial kisses, and a guard of honour shouted "long live the Comrade General-Secretary," as Mr Hu acknowledged the cheers of about 3,000 flag-waving Romanians at Otopeni airport.

The welcome appeared to be much less lavish than the one given to former Chairman Hua Guofeng, the last Chinese leader to visit Eastern Europe, in 1978. It is the first trip for Mr Hu since he took over as general secretary of the party in June, 1981.

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SPECTRUM

You may think you learnt by rote, but it could have been by 'morphic resonance'. Dr Rupert Sheldrake (right) has set the scientific world in turmoil with his theory that living things 'tune in' to the knowledge of their predecessors

Are we all on the same wavelength?

By Peter Lewis

Are children quicker at learning to ride bicycles, or to roller skate, than they were at the turn of the century? Will tomorrow's children be quicker at learning to play video or computer games than the present generation? If so, could it be because they are able to "tune in" to the skills acquired by their predecessors?

The answers to these questions, if they could be accurately measured, might throw light on a radically new hypothesis which claims to explain what shapes the forms and behaviour of living things.

The theory of "formative causation" is advanced by Dr Rupert Sheldrake, whose name has been both celebrated and execrated among his fellow-biologists since he published a book called *A New Science of Life* nearly two years ago. In it he proposed that the embryos of living things "tune in" to a field created by past members of the same species - an undiscovered force in nature which operates on the simplest cell up to the most complex organism.

He calls it a "morphogenetic field", which operates across space and time by "morphic resonance" - from the Greek for form, *morphe*, and the sort of resonance whereby one musical instrument makes another vibrate. He believes that developing creatures receive, rather like a radio programme put out by past exemplars of their kind, a pattern-making transmission which makes legs into legs, arms into arms, and which makes frogs behave in a froggy fashion and dogs in a doggy one.

Sheldrake had respectable scientific credentials as a plant biologist, fellow

of Clare College, Cambridge, and holder of a research fellowship of the Royal Society, but his hypothesis caused a furor. It postulated a new, immaterial force of nature that did not involve matter or energy and it conflicted head-on with the mechanist faith that everything can be reduced to physics and chemistry.

What of genetic programming? What of DNA? What of natural selection? Sheldrake believes their importance has been exaggerated. They are like the valves and copper wire connections of a radio set: the actual programme is transmitted from somewhere else.

Denouncing Sheldrake as a heretic in a passionate and intemperate editorial, the editor of *Nature* magazine was appalled that this "infuriating tract" as being hailed as an answer to materialistic science. Sheldrake was not only wrong, he was encouraging the thought that "there might be a place for magic in science."

The *New Scientist*, on the other hand, championed Sheldrake's right to be heard and to be judged by experiment. It pointed out that "modern science itself is founded on a hypothesis that has not been specifically tested: that the materialist explanations are all that is required."

Both journals' correspondence columns sizzled like heated retorts for months. The *New Scientist* offered a £250 prize for the best idea for an experiment to test whether morphic resonance indeed exists. Meanwhile, the Tarrytown Group, a scientific ideas forum in Tarrytown, New York,

offered a prize of \$10,000 for the best test that confirms or refutes the hypothesis by 1983, open to anyone, scientist or not.

Now the *New Scientist* has announced the winning entry in its competition, a simple and cheap experiment, which could be carried out in schools, to test whether learning something is made easier by the fact that many other people - preferably millions of them - have learnt it before you.

The winner, a fluid mechanics lecturer from Nottingham, Dr Richard Gentle, argues that according to Sheldrake a nursery rhyme, such as "Twinkle, twinkle, little star", should be very easy to learn because of all the children who have learnt it in the past.

The problem is to find a comparable rhyme to test it against, and enough people who do not know the rhyme already. So he chose a four-line Turkish nursery rhyme, known to generations of Turkish children, and altered the word-sequence to produce a similar looking rhyme, which is in fact gibberish, though only a Turkish-speaker could tell the difference.

The idea is to invite groups of pupils in schools to learn one or other of the rhymes, timing how long it takes them to repeat one of them by heart. Then the average learning time for the genuine rhyme and the fake can be compared, nobody involved knowing which was which.

If the genuine rhyme is learnt more quickly, it could have been helped along by the pooled memory field of all

those Turkish children. But will the result settle the matter? Not on its own, certainly. It is too wide-ranging a theory to be settled by a nursery rhyme and Sheldrake has devised other experiments.

If rats learn a new trick, other rats in other laboratories should become quicker at learning it. This effect was discovered by the psychologist, William McDougall, at Harvard, in the 1920s. Successive generations of his rats improved their speed of learning how to escape from a tank of water by means of a gangway.

This did not prove that they had inherited the ability. When the experiments were repeated in Australia, with unrelated strains of rats as controls, it was found that it made no difference which rats were used, their descendants all improved their performance.

Sheldrake has proposed a new experiment with rats in widely separate laboratories, to see if they affect one another's rate of learning as McDougall's rats seem to have done. Other experiments are possible with the growing of new crystals, with mutations in fruit-flies and with learning video games in, say, rural India.

If the theory is right, should we not have noticed its effect by now? Sheldrake believes we have. He says: "One of the mysteries of learning language is that babies do it so fast compared to adults. This applies also to an English baby learning Chinese, in Chinese surroundings, or visa versa. Children pick up the rules of the game, without text-books of grammar and

start making up new sentences, using the language creatively.

"This sort of creative learning should be impossible on a stimulus-response model of learning. It led Chomsky to postulate an innate language ability, no matter what language, and therefore a 'deep structure' that all languages had in common. I believe it is morphic resonance at work. Any child picking up English, or Chinese, is assisted by the pool of previous learning of either language."

Sheldrake interrupted a well-established Cambridge career when he was in his thirties by going to Hyderabad to work at the International Crop Research Institute on improving strains and yields. He lived in a rajah's crumbling palace and his mind was freed to develop his theory. In 1978 he went to an ashram run by a Benedictine monk and wrote it down, in a hut under a banyan tree, on the banks of the river Cauvery in Southern India. After 18 months' work he brought back the first draft to his home in Newark, Nottinghamshire.

What made him start on his new science of life? It was the inability of current biology to account for the development of the plants he was working on. Cells that become leaves and cells that become stalks carry exactly the same DNA. The process of becoming a plant, a fish, a mammal or a human being is equally mysterious. The orthodox response is that one day we will be able to explain it in terms of incredibly complex interactions of physics and chemistry between cells,

triggered by a DNA code. This is an act of faith. It is at least as simple, and perhaps more intelligible, to imagine the process being conducted by morphogenetic fields.

The fields account more easily for the amazing capacity of living things to regenerate or repair themselves. "If you cut off parts of an embryo, it regenerates the missing parts. If you cut a magnet in half you get two complete magnetic fields, not two halves", Sheldrake points out. "In both cases the field maintains its integrity."

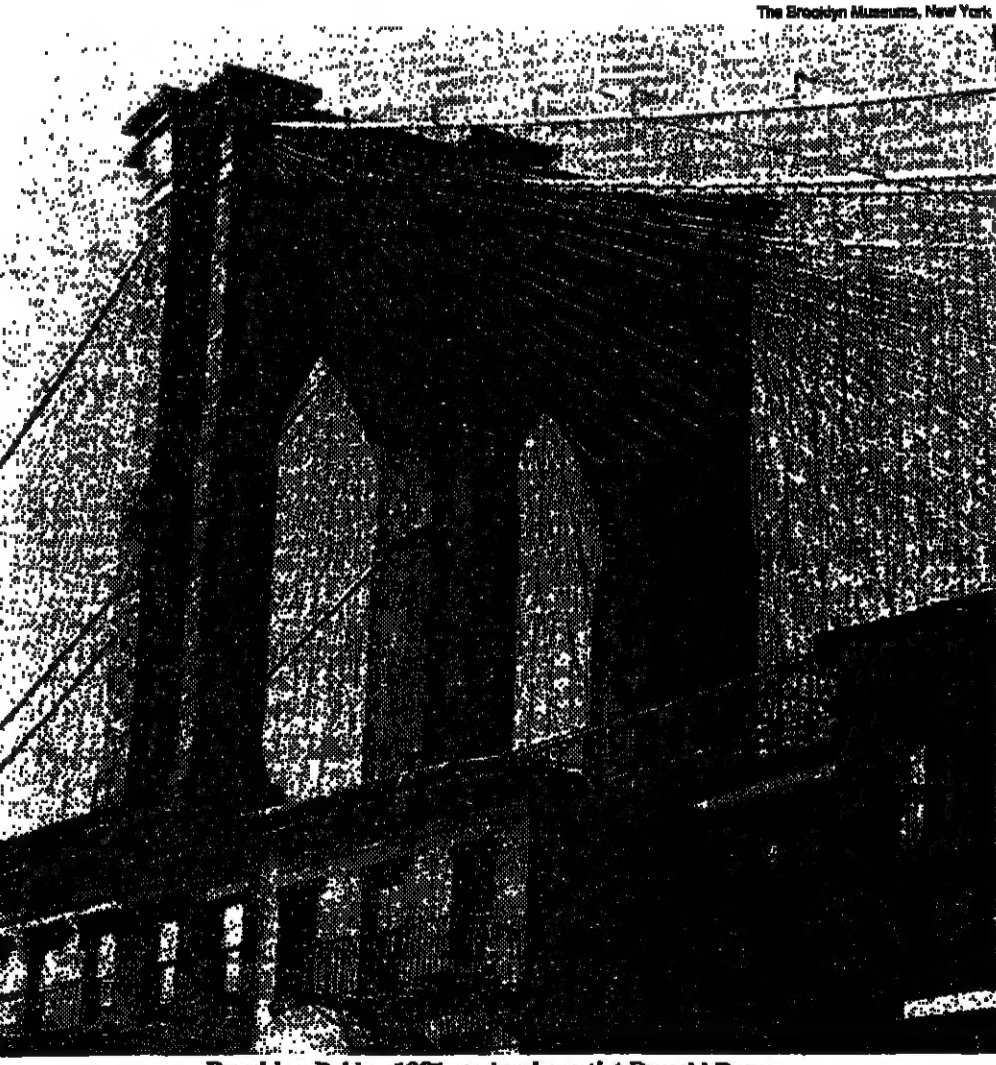
A kind of Conservation of Form principle could account for the way the eye of a newt, robbed of its lens, will grow a new one out of its own iris, or the way any gardener can raise a whole plant from a small cutting. It could explain how flesh, bones and fingernails make good damage done to them.

"I am not the first person to suggest that morphogenetic fields are needed to explain development," said Sheldrake. "What is new about my interpretation is that the fields derive their structure from the past. What gives a fingernail field a fingernail structure? Plato held that somewhere there was an eternal, archetypal fingernail. I say that the field is caused by actual fingernails of the past, a kind of pooled memory."

"Changes usually occur because the normal pathway is blocked, perhaps by a genetic defect or by a change in environment. Sometimes this defeats the organism. But in certain rare cases there is a creative jump." This can be seen when animals learn a new behaviour pattern. About 1952 blue tits learned how to open milk bottle tops and the habit spread through the tit population of Europe. Copying hardly seemed an adequate explanation of such a sudden and widespread new habit. Perhaps, after enough tits had learned the trick, a morphic resonance was set up affecting the rest.

Sheldrake's hypothesis meets the criterion of a scientific theory - it is verifiable by experiments which could prove its predictions. Sheldrake is eager to have it put to as many tests as possible. But supposing it fails the test - or that no confirmatory evidence can be found, what then? "If the balance of evidence is against it, I would have to abandon the theory," he says. "The possibility would remain that morphogenetic fields exist, though not created by past examples. They could be timeless, changeless principles, rather like Plato's archetypes. Or perhaps the mechanistic theory will ultimately explain everything without them."

His ideas have certainly caused a lot of excitement and attention: this week he goes to California, where he is already well known, to lecture on them. In June, he has been asked to go to Washington to address the Congressional Committee on The Future of the Nation and its implications. And, who knows, somebody may even now be conducting the make-or-break experiment that may fundamentally alter our understanding of how life in its multifarious forms comes about.



Brooklyn Bridge 1981, a view by artist Donald Burns

One of New York's famous landmarks is 100 years old this month

The bridge so far...

One of the longest journeys in the world, Norman Redburn wrote, finding a particularly apt metaphor for the American Dream, is the journey from Brooklyn to Manhattan. The concrete symbol of that American aspiration is the Brooklyn Bridge, which celebrates its 100th birthday this month.

Even when it was new, the bridge assumed a mythic stature. An architectural critic, Montgomery Schuyler, welcomed it in 1883 with these words: "It is so happens that the work which is likely to be our most durable monument, and convey some knowledge of us to the most remote posterity, is not a work of bare utility; not a shrine, not a fortress, not a palace..."

New Yorkers are preparing to celebrate the anniversary, but one trusts that the festivities will not be as hectic as those of the opening week, when such a massive holiday crowd surged on to the bridge that 12 people were trampled to death. Yet that was rather characteristic. From the beginning, sufficient tragedy attended the construction of the bridge to make it a truly heroic enterprise, and one that was immediately perceived as an expression of something in the American spirit.

Its progenitor, John A. Roebling, a German-born en-

gineer, was killed by it. Roebling was one of those stern, determined characters that the nineteenth century specialized in producing the world over. Having emigrated in 1831, he founded a German settlement called Saxtonburg, in Pennsylvania, where he intended to farm and, of all things, breed canaries.

Though the township prospered, Roebling's own means of support proved unsatisfactory, and he turned to making iron rope - the first in the United States. It was used in the cable railways that crossed the mountains of the state. Soon he was building suspension bridges, most spectacularly across the Niagara Falls but also in Pittsburgh and Cincinnati.

The reverse side of his scientific rationalism was a passionate but unfounded belief in hydropathy - the curing of illnesses by bathing. When, down by the Brooklyn waterfront prospecting the site for one of the bridge towers, his foot was crushed by a docking boat, his response was to plunge it instantly into a tub of cold water. Tetanus set in and he died in horrible suffering three weeks later.

That was in 1869. His son, Colonel Washington A. Roebling, who had played a notable

part at Gettysburg, took over, and the bridge left him a permanent invalid. The problem was the technique used to build the vast towers, each weighing 70,000 tons, on either side of the East River.

To sink the foundations, great bottomless wooden boxes called caissons - each half the size of a city block - were constructed, submerged by means of stones piled on the top, and pumped full of compressed air, which kept them watertight. Gangs of unskilled immigrant labourers, on the whole pleased to find jobs that paid more than the average, entered by means of airlocks and quarried down to bedrock by hand.

But some workers developed cramps and headaches and were sent to walk with a scotch, thereafter referred to as the "Grecian Bend" (the name of a ballroom dance). This malady was, of course, the bends, still known medically as caisson disease. After a long spell in one of the caissons when fire broke out in 1871, Washington Roebling collapsed.

Attacks recurred and he was forced to withdraw from the work altogether, lying in agony in a darkened room, although he finally recovered sufficiently to direct work from his house in

Brooklyn, overlooking the site. Twenty-five men lost their lives while the bridge was being built. Many died from the bends - their legs, according to one contemporary account of their sufferings, "twisted like plaited hair". Because of the danger, the Manhattan caisson was stopped before bedrock was reached, so that the tower rests on packed sand. Some men fell from the towers or were killed when a suspension wire snapped and lashed back.

The bridge, 14 years in building, was subject to the graft and corruption inherent in most great American public works of the time. The notorious Tammany Hall politician, "Boss" Tweed, managed to gain control of the bridge company and award contracts, until he was imprisoned.

All Roebling's vigilance was necessary to prevent J. Lloyd Haigh, the cable contractor, from forging certificates or switching loads and sending to the bridge steel that the inspectors had failed.

Yet almost as once the bridge captured the public imagination. Even before it was begun, a Congressman called Barnes declared: "Babylon had her hanging gardens, Nineveh her towers, and Rome her Colosseum; let us have this great

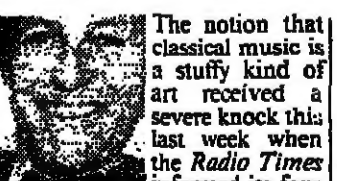
monument to progress." When built, the towers - arched like the aisles of a Gothic cathedral - were among the city's tallest structures. Head, shoulders and torso above the tenements of Brooklyn. To *Harper's Weekly*, they were "more wonderful than the Pyramids".

Needless to say, as soon as the bridge opened to the public there were those who either fell or deliberately threw themselves off it. A self-publicist swimming instructor called R. E. Odum jumped to his death in 1885. Steve Brodie claimed to have leapt (he probably did not) and made a fortune out of reenacting the scene in a play called *On the Bowery*. The youth slipping from the catwalk in the film *Saturday Night Fever* is only the latest in a tradition.

In recent years, real-life tragedies have also occurred. In 1981, a pedestrian was killed when a stay parted and whipped downwards. But the engineers are confident that the bridge, built with human sacrifice and occasionally still exacting its toll, will survive another century yet.

Clive Aslet

The author is senior architectural writer for Country Life.



The notion that classical music is a stuffy kind of art received a severe knock this last week when the *Radio Times* informed its four million readers that Brahms, when young, had earned a living playing the piano in brothels in Hamburg. This came as a shock both to the pop fraternity, who thought that only the Beatles ever got started in Hamburg, and to jazz fans, who were under the impression that only Jelly Roll Morton got started in a brothel.

Morton, who had a diamond set in his teeth, played champion pool, pimped, claimed to have invented jazz and had a long-running rivalry with Duke Ellington, was actually a pale character when set beside Brahms. It is often forgotten that Brahms, too, claimed to have discovered jazz, though this was due to a misunderstanding for which he was not responsible.

It happened in the cotton fields near Budapest one day, when Brahms was out for a walk, trying to dream up another trick to play on Wagner - the Duke Ellington of his day. He gradually became aware that the workers in the fields were singing alluring and dangerously exciting rhythms as they turned the cotton into drip-dry tunics for the Imperial Court. Brahms's fingers snapped and his eyes sparkled.

"Hey, what do you call that kind of music?" he asked one of the singers. "What do we call dat music?" said the man thus addressed, played by the young Louis Armstrong. "Why, we call dat music jazz!" This was a mischievous invention on his part, as they actually called it Hungarian folk music, but he reckoned that the young man with the mane of white hair and huge grey beard

Play it again, Johannes

MOREOVER... Miles Kingston

would fall for it. He was right. Brahms liked to be in tip-top physical shape, mostly because he was waiting for the promised 12-round contest against Wagner that the latter seemed afraid to turn up for. "I'll get that Hun. By the end of round one," Brahms used to taunt him. "Just get me in the Ring with Wagner," he boasted to friends. "And I'll eat him for coffee break." Once the threatened fight did actually take place, but unbeknownst to Brahms, Wagner had hired Bruno Walter, the Bavarian Mauser, to take his place. Brahms only found out the truth after 12 gruelling rounds which the judges scored six to Brahms and six to his opponent, with Brahms winning the encore on points.

Brahms was always secretly disappointed that the stuffed shirt audiences didn't show more reaction, and he would often break off in the middle of a piece and observe drily to the listeners: "This place is licensed for dancing, you know."

"Just typical of Wagner," growled Brahms afterwards, "to send in a dog for a big gig." He later got his own back when he thrashed Wagner at snooker in the big Bayreuth Finals. 16 frames to three, and went on to meet the Russian champion, Tchaikovsky, whom he always considered rather too effete to be a really good snooker player.

Brahms was a larger-than-life character who had diamonds set in all the white keys of his travelling piano. Before he breezed into a new town, the place would be plastered with posters saying: "Brahms is coming! All pianists are requested to leave town for their own safety." And then the great man himself would arrive, in a white suit, surrounded by bodyguards and attended personally by the Abbé Liszt. The first thing he would ask on arrival was the address of the

CONCISE CROSSWORD (No 54)

ACROSS
1 Ambassador's aid (7)
5 Trade name (5)
8 Girl (3)
9 Signing (7)
10 Forename (5)
11 Point (4)
12 Scaly creature (7)
14 Ingeniousness (13)
16 Fine fabric (7)
18 Verbal (4)
21 Italian first (5)
22 Fortified place (7)
23 Low (3)
24 Bird of prey (5)
25 Rifle knife (7)

DOWN
1 Military force (4)
2 Land (5)
3 Play equipment (3)
4 Mouth (5)
5 Impiously (15)
6 Obstinate (7)

SOLUTION TO No 53
ACROSS: 1 Unwrap 5 Dignity 8 Loo 9 Raffle 10 Report 11 Char 12 Decorous 13 Object 15 January 17 Balletic 20 Fear 22 Cuddles 23 Zigzag 24 Fox 25 Talent 26 Indian
DOWN: 2 Neath 3 Reference 4 Flaudist 5 Doric 6 Paper 7 Circuit 14 Bravura 15 Jaccuzzi 16 Unpugged 18 Ledge 19 Theft 21 Abaca (Solution to No 54 on Monday) Recommended dictionary is the New Collins Concise English

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FRIDAY PAGE

A man about the house

Swapping domestic roles seems to do more for sexual equality than the nagging of liberationists. Veronica Grocock talks to three couples who switched roles as a result of necessity after the husbands became redundant

As well as the normal stresses of being lone breadwinner, the working wife is prey to a set of traditional assumptions about the division of labour. She is the victim of a social system geared to male authority which effectively denies her very existence. The most obvious example of this is in relation to Family Income Supplement. A married woman cannot claim F.I.S. because, ostensibly, she is not the head of the household. Similarly, the jobless husband whose wife is supporting him is not eligible for supplementary benefit.

According to the Low Pay Unit, up to 270,000 women are affected in this way. A spokeswoman said that usually a woman's wage was not enough to maintain a family, and yet the woman herself was barred from "topping up" her income with F.I.S. For most women breadwinners, therefore, it made more sense to become unemployed and fall back on supplementary benefit.

In November, thanks to an EEC directive, the F.I.S. ruling will be changed so that, for social security benefit purposes, the breadwinner's sex is immaterial.

The Low Pay Unit, while welcoming this, will continue to press for overall improvements in women's earnings. "For a long time now we've argued for a minimum wage as being of major value to women workers," said the spokeswoman. A recent report, *Families in the Future*, by the Study Commission on the Family, explodes the idea of the typical worker as the married man with a wife at home. Married women, it says, now represent a quarter of the workforce.

It states that more than two million children live in families with incomes around the poverty line. It also reveals that without women's earnings, four times as many families would be in poverty. As one woman lecturer/breadwinner said: "With unemployment as high as it is, who is and who is not the breadwinner is often a matter of luck, not choice."

John and Sue Tanner are in their late thirties and live in Scunthorpe. They own their home and have two children, William, aged 11, and Robert, aged nine. John, a former community relations officer, was made redundant in October. Sue is a welfare rights worker, a job she was offered only weeks before the news of John's redundancy. Previously she worked part-time at a local women's aid group, and before that was a full-time housewife.

Sue's John has always been the sort of husband who did quite a lot at home. He took over a lot of the child care and housework. The problem for me is that my job is 25 miles away and I don't get paid as much as he did just over £6,000 a year, compared with John's previous salary of £9,500.

Financial worries aside, Sue is enjoying the swap. "I sometimes worry about what would happen if I lost my job. Every breadwinner does, I suppose. But I do get quite a kick out of being the one who brings home the money, and it's nice coming home to a cooked meal. "We both felt that swapping jobs for a while would be good for us both. I am sure John is a lot more aware of what goes into running a house. Each of us appreciates the other one more than we did before."

"I don't always agree with the way he does things, like shopping or cooking. He bakes bread and feels very protective about it, and if I go out and buy a loaf he resents it."

Although John pays the bills, the Tanners have always pooled their finances and have a joint bank account. The drop in salary has

meant a drop in their standard of living, with the "inevitable friction" if John wants to go to the pub.

Sue finds that being the breadwinner makes it far easier to treat home as a place of relaxation. "When you are at home with the children, there are always a hundred things you should be doing. You never actually relax. Out at work, the lunch-hour is yours - time out for yourself."

John: "It's an opportunity to do things that one has always wanted. At 37 I have learned how to make pastry and bread, and I am keeping chickens. It's quite fun, as long as it doesn't go on too long. With a 30 per cent unemployment rate in Scunthorpe, the remark John regularly hears is "Lovely weather. Are you working?" He finds the isolation the hardest part.

"Your wife comes home from work and says 'Had an interesting day?' You say 'I cleaned the upstairs lavatory' and suddenly realize how boring you've become!"

"At work you do have a lot of power and it's easier to feel you've done something. Even if you've been there chewing your nails you've been to work and this is your justification for the day," said John. On the plus side, John sees more of their sons ("I have it easy because they are growing up now. It's not an onerous responsibility"), and has more control of the money, if less of it to spend.

John admits to a very strong need to be in work. "I say it doesn't matter, but deep down it does. Housewives are not valued very highly in society, and at the moment

I'm a housewife and I don't really like it. The longer I go on the more desperate I shall become. But it has given Sue more status. I don't think she ever wanted to be a housewife at home with children. Sue is very happy at work and finds it stimulating and rewarding."

Jane and Peter Smith (not their real names) are in their fifties and live in a council house in Poole. They have three children, two still at home: a daughter, and a 22-year-old son who claims supplementary benefit. In June 1982 Peter, an electrical sales assistant, was made redundant after 27 years' service. Jane works for a firm of insurance brokers and her weekly take-home pay is £51. Peter was earning £4,000 a year plus commission.

Jane: "It was a crashing blow at Peter's time of life, because we thought we had gone through the worst years and were looking forward to an easier ride. All of a sudden we seemed to be back at square one." She gets angry, particularly at the bureaucratic anomalies, such as the provision of family income supplement, that militate against the married woman as breadwinner.

Things are unlikely to improve, she feels, until Peter finds another job. "I have always been on the side of the underdog, never dreaming that one day it would be me in that category." She worries constantly about the future. "There is this terrible uncertainty. I just don't know how it will end."

Peter: "Work was becoming an ordeal. I was being pressurized, and redundancy was suggested. I was



Sue and Richard Ambrose: reassessment of less rigid roles

heading for a nervous breakdown. I thought 'if I don't get out of here soon I will crack up.' His initial reaction was sheer relief. "We managed to get a holiday in Crete, with part of my £3,000 redundancy money." Hopes of setting up his own business were dashed and he suffers from anxiety and depression and sometimes takes tranquilizers.

"I go to bed with a headache, and wake up with one. The tension affects my eyes. I have terrible eye strain. I sometimes think 'What is the point of going on? I only have a few pounds left in the bank. We are penniless. I've never been in this situation in my life.' The biggest problem is coping with the depression. "You try to think of ways of getting out of this rut, but you keep coming across barriers. It's like being hemmed in."

He feels degraded. The strain of it all has affected his relationship with Jane. "She has been very concerned and a great help, but there is tension between us. Things are not as they once were. She looks very miserable and white at times. I try to keep a stiff upper lip. I say 'Cheer up. Things are bound to get better.' She says she can't see how they will."

Richard and Sue Ambrose are in their late twenties and live in a council house in Rainham, in the Medway area of Kent. They have one son, Tariq, aged 2½, and Lisa, aged 12, and Maria, aged 10, two daughters from Sue's previous marriage, as well as two Afghanis, a hamster and a tortoise. Richard is a

qualified electrician, though recently he worked in a factory. He has been unemployed since January 1982. Sue is a residential social worker looking after young people in care at a local community home. Her weekly take-home pay is £65, which includes overtime and sleeping-in allowances. (She is also a qualified teacher and youth worker.)

Richard: "I can't see me getting a job anywhere, so this was the next best thing. Because she's got opportunities, you see, so why waste them? I'm a male version of my mother (she's a part-time cleaner in a dockyard). My mother was very houseproud. She was always cleaning: it was one of her fortes. In the same way, I'm inclined to get too involved with it. We have our little ups and downs in this. I'll say: 'get out of the way, I want to clean there'. I suppose a lot of people must think I'm a bit weird."

Sue: "Even close friends who've known us for years - especially the men - tend to have digs at me. 'You've got him well-trained, haven't you?' Or, 'What's Rich doing, baby-sitting again?' At first it was quite amusing but after a while it wears off."

Richard is garrulous and good-humoured in faded denim, his long hair tied back hippy-style. Does he mind having to ask Sue for money? "Well, she never seemed to mind when she asked me for it!"

Sue chips in: "It's not my money: it's ours. I mean, if it's there we spend it."

Like John Tanner, Richard has

experienced the "lonely housewife" syndrome. "Half-past six I used to go to work. I'd see people on the bus. You just nodded to them. Occasionally you might pass words about the weather, but that was it. But they were still people. You absorbed something from them, whereas here, dogs apart, there's only Tariq, and trying to have an in-depth conversation with him is impossible!"

The couple cannot afford to go out more than once or twice a month. "The longer I stay in the harder I find it to go out," says Richard. "I get very used to the environment I've created, so I'm inclined to stay with it. It's as though this building has stopped and time out there can do what the hell it likes."

Sue has always hated housework whereas Richard, when he first took on the role of house-husband, was almost obsessed with tidiness. He still is, to a degree, and feels fiercely protective about his role. "It's mine. If she starts doing it, I think I'm out of a job."

Sue's illness with a kidney complaint last summer enabled them to reassess their roles, which became less rigid. Richard: "I can understand why a lot of marriages fail, 'cos they are two such separate people, poles apart, and the friction that causes. I don't consider myself totally male. I mean, the males that I would call males wouldn't know how to cook anything or even how to plug a vacuum cleaner in. They know how to take cars apart and about the price of drinks, but I was never that way inclined anyway."



John and Sue Tanner. John says: 'I'm a housewife now and I don't really like it. Deep down being in work matters.'

It might be assumed that the influence of The Worshipful Company of Cutlers of London would have waned once the knife makers went north and abandoned Fleet Street to the journalists; but the ancient livery companies are adaptable. An interest in Surgical Instrument making. This month they presented their annual award to Mr B. Sterry Ashby, the surgeon, for his work with a special endoscope, an illuminated tube which allows the operator to look along the common bile duct.

The story of endoscopes started in the last century when Dr Kussman was inspired by watching a sword swallower. He reasoned that if the man could be made to swallow a tube it would be possible to look at the inside of his stomach.

Later electric torchlight in a rigid tube exposed the inside of some organs - gullet, stomach, bronchial tubes and colon - to the surgeon's gaze. But the discovery in 1928 by John Logie Baird of a method of transmitting light along a flexible glass-fibre bundle allowed the production of a whole range of flexible fibre-optic endoscopes.

Mr Sterry Ashby has been working with the manufacturers on his particular endoscope, known as a choledochoscope, since 1974. If it had been invented 20 years earlier history might have been changed. Sir Anthony Eden's common bile duct was cut in a fruitless search for a stone. With this instrument direct vision of the inside of the duct could have been obtained and the means of retrieval of the stone, without causing near-fatal damage, made possible.

Dracula syndrome

Two psychiatrists in Cape Town have written a paper for the South African Medical Journal which suggests that a possible murder motive overlooked in the past is a bizarre desire to drink blood. Dr R. E. Hemphill and Dr T. Zabow report in detail on three

MEDICAL BRIEFING

The light of life

cases where white middle-class males, not apparently of Transylvanian origin, have had this craving, satisfied only by taking blood from animals when still alive, or after death from the abattoirs, or by sucking blood from the necks and shoulders of their lovers. Denied these sources, they have cut their own wrists to drink their own blood.

In a review of these and other cases, who have attended Cape Town University's psychiatric department, they report that although women are inclined to be auto-vampires, usually drinking their own blood, men are reported to take other people's. They cite Haigh, the acid bath murderer, as a classic vampire; it is known that he murdered nine people, cut their throats and drank a cupful of blood from each.

Vampirists are preoccupied with death and the dead. Even as small children they have an obsessive desire to visit cemeteries in a search for bodies and bones, and keep dead animals in their bedrooms. The report suggests that this yearning may lead to repeated assaults or unexplained murder, and should be considered in assessing the record of violent criminals who show evidence of self-mutilation.

Coffee or claret?

Dr Joan Braganza, Senior Lecturer in Gastroenterology at Manchester University, was awarded a major prize at the Doctor of the Year luncheon this week for her work on pancreatic disease. It is likely that the paper read by the judges is only an appetizer for more startling work.

Dr Braganza was reticent about her unpublished paper, but said that recent studies, while not pinpointing the cause of one of nature's most horrid

and rapidly lethal cancers, carcinoma of the pancreas, do indicate the way in which future research should be directed.

Cancer of the pancreas is the fifth most common cause of death from cancer in Britain. The disease has a long, silent period which may exceed two years before it produces symptoms severe enough to make a patient see his doctor. By then it is too late; the average survival time is seven months and only 1 per cent live five years.

The incidence of the disease is increasing, and seems to bear relationship to a sophisticated lifestyle. Various statistics published in America have suggested a relationship to coffee drinking, but direct evidence is lacking.

Beer beri

Beri-beri is a disease more often associated with wartime Changi Jail than the local, yet the Scottish Medical Journal reports two near-fatal cases in beer drinkers.

Cardiac, or wet, beri-beri, is caused by thiamine, Vitamin B, deficiency. Perhaps because it is usually diagnosed in beer rather than whisky drinkers these are the first cases to be reported in Scotland. In alcoholics the disease is due to poor utilization secondary to liver disease, impaired absorption and increased requirement.

Both the Scots patients had signs and symptoms of severe cardiac failure, in conjunction with damage to the nervous system. Their hearts were enlarged, lungs waterlogged, legs swollen, muscles weak, their minds confused and their reflexes were almost absent.

They were treated with all the standard measures for heart failure, but it was only when the first patient became moribund that the doctors discovered that for 10 years he had been

drinking eight to 10 pints of beer a day. His heart failure responded to thiamine within a fortnight and he regained his strength in six months.

The second patient admitted was luckier; his daily consumption of up to eight pints a day was immediately noted, his thiamine reserves estimated, found too low, and treated. He made a quick recovery.

Anti-Chianti

According to Mr Geoffrey Gibbon, a London wine merchant, Californian wine sales more than doubled in Britain between 1979 and 1981. It seems suitable that it should be two Californians, Dr David Glaser and George Tarnowsky, who may have found a way, reported in *Medical News*, of avoiding the headache from which many people suffer after even small quantities of red wine.

The doctors suggest that the headache is due to a histamine-induced effect of red wine and can be avoided if the person takes a tablet of Tagamet (cimetidine) before they drink.

Toenail fever

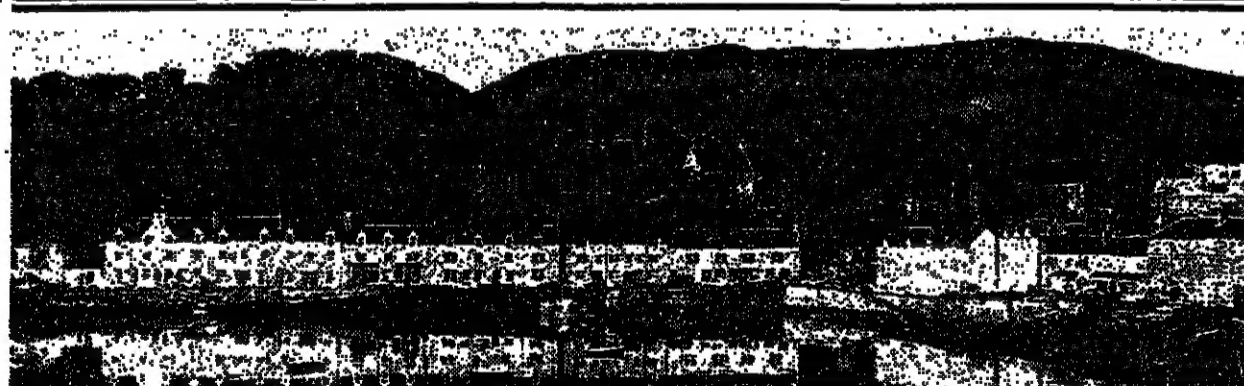
An occupational hazard faced by chiropodists has been investigated by Dr Roland Davies of St Mary's Hospital, London. Therapy Weekly reports.

The hazard is toenail dust, blown into the air by trimming drills. It causes an allergic reaction similar to hay fever, with sore eyes and runny noses. Evidence suggests that some of the dust containing spores of the fungi, trichophyton rubrum, responsible for athlete's foot, may be inhaled. Although 17 per cent of chiropodists have antibodies to this fungus in their blood, no case of lung disease has yet been diagnosed; in theory chiropodists could suffer from "farmer's lung", a pneumonitis caused by inhaling the spores from mouldy hay.

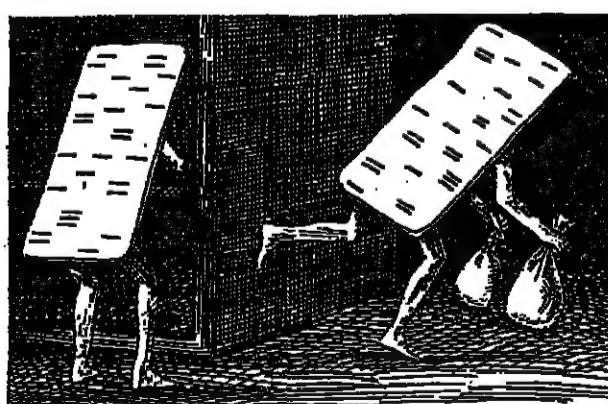
Dr Thomas Stuttford Medical Correspondent

THE TIMES Tomorrow

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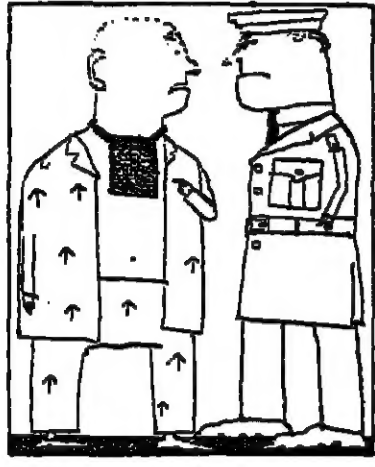
THE TIMES DIARY

Save it

Arthur Rosebud invents gadgets that "consume energy as if there were no tomorrow" the National Consumer Council says. His automatic dog-walker, anti-insomnia machine and super-heated swimming pool incur the displeasure of the Department of Energy, and he is persuaded to turn his garden into a testing ground for water wheels and windmills instead.

Arthur Rosebud's *Revelation* is a play commissioned by the Department of Energy to tour schools putting across the message about energy conservation and alternative sources. Meanwhile the Department has cut its budget for research in such matters by more than a fifth this year. "We have simply concentrated our resources", an energetic official explains.

BARRY FANTONI



'But what happens if someone mugs me and it gets sick?'

Unsuitable

Surprise at the record price (£1,925,000) paid for the Henri II suit of armour in Sotheby's Hever sale yesterday is heightened by the fact that Hever was hardly a good advertisement for armour. He was killed in a joust with Captain Montgomery of his Scots Guards when a sliver of lance penetrated first his visor and then his brain.

● I salute the careful husbandry at W. H. Smith's London Branch which yesterday, when the 1983 Proms were announced, was still offering for sale the 1982 prospectus.

Keeping mum

What have Rhodes Boyson and Laurie Pevitt, Conservative and Labour MPs for Brent North and South respectively, in common? Not much, but their names were both big in the Co-op, a discovery I owe to the research Jean Gaffin and David Thoms put into their centenary history of the Co-operative Women's Guild, *Caring and Sharing*, published this week. Pevitt's mother was national president in 1934, and he worked for the Co-op youth movement before becoming a Labour and Co-op MP. Less predictably, Rhodes Boyson was president of the Haslingden branch for a long period, and Rhodes himself was six years a director of the local Co-op. "I never knew that before", says Gaffin, "and he's my MP."

Astute students

Alex Hambro, son of the chairman of Hambro's Bank James Ogilvy, son of Angus Ogilvy and Princess Alexandra; and Rupert Goodman, son of an Elton housemaster, are, as Cambridge undergraduates, supplementing their government grants by running a glossy London giveaway magazine called *Freeway*. Now in its third issue, the magazine is examined with expensive (£400-£700) ads for manor houses, luxury cars, decanters of cognac at £90, and the like. The business section has articles by a director of Hambro's, and by Sir Nicholas Goodison, chairman of the Stock Exchange. The young entrepreneurs claim the magazine goes free to 5,000 AB businessmen.

Oops-a-Daisy

Will the drama critic of *The Guardian* report to the head's study after school? His review of the ripping school yarn, *Daisy Pulls It Off*, is quoted in the West End. "...a wealth of accurate detail. The play, set in the 1920s, opens with a rousing rendition of 'There'll always be an England'. The song was written in 1939."

Word to the wise

I live with the inhibiting notion that *Times* readers know everything already. So here is a challenge. In connection with next week's publication of the new *Chambers Dictionary* a competition has been organized with a copy as the prize. It is identify the word which means "the courting of searwen of icebound ships". Tell me the answer quickly enough, and I'll give you the prize.

Driving is a dodgy business in south-west England, the World Conference on Transport Research heard in Hamburg last week. One out of every 16 crossroads in the region points in the wrong direction. The discovery was made by Department of Transport engineers testing a computer program to check for inconsistencies and errors in the national signpost network. In the eight south-western counties places were so often left off, pointed for no reason or mentioned only intermittently that an average of seven changes would be needed at every road intersection to achieve consistency.

PHS

Ken Livingstone's pantomime cow

While most of England and Wales has cast its vote, Londoners must wait until 1985 before passing judgment on the Labour-controlled GLC.

Anne Sofer, a Social Democrat councillor, assesses its first two years.

At a recent council meeting, in an attempt to enliven a dull debate about the GLC's "Peace Year" proposals, the front bench Labour spokesman wound up with a rousing speech. "I'm not a pacifist" (he said passionately) "I'm ready to fight. But when we go to war, it won't be against the Russians. Oh, no." (And he pointed dramatically at the Tories on the front bench opposite) "It will be against you fascists over there!"

This is the sort of thing the council loves. Since most of the business has been predicated in the committees and before that in the Labour group, council meetings are regarded less as policy-making occasions than as oratorical jousts. This particular clash of arms was greeted with cheers and jeers, shouts of admiration and roars of outrage. The speaker turned to accept the congratulations of his colleagues and the Conservatives rose to shake their fists. Another high point to remember in the bar afterwards.

The element of charade has always been strong at County Hall. Its proceedings are so strongly influenced by the consciousness of that other seat of government across the river that it often seems to be performing a dress rehearsal, or parody, of a production going on elsewhere. Most debates in the council chamber are on matters over which the GLC has no control at all: defence policy, Northern Ireland, monetarism, the Falklands.

But in the two long years of the present administration the charade has been transformed from a genteel parlour game to a full-blown, commercial West End pantomime, costing £2m this year on promotion and advertising alone. To some the Labour leadership is a fairy godmother, to others the demon king. To me it is Daisy the pantomime cow, a creature pretending to be what it is not, poking its face into things which are not its concern, and thereby successfully stealing the show from the straight actors who are trying to hold the plot together.

But behind the spotlights and the fustian is the uncomfortable truth that the GLC has never found its proper purpose since it was set up by a Conservative government in 1964 as part of a two-tier structure in which it was to be the "strategic" authority over the London boroughs. Nobody has ever known what strategic meant. Apart from public transport - and even here it is boxed in on all sides - the GLC's statutory functions have all but disappeared.

But the council also has discretionary powers, and it is these that it is now exercising to try and get a foothold in practically every area of London life: health, training, the police, community arts, trade union activity, child care, energy policy - the new committees and panels and working parties proliferate. And each has its own budget and staff.

The cornucopia of grants, combined with the high profile of the present administration, has created an atmosphere at County Hall that is a cross between a students' union and a campaign headquarters. Labour leaders talk euphorically about having "opened up the corridors of power to the community". The crowds, thronging those pompous, oak-paneled, marble-columned halls are indeed younger, more multi-racial and more self-assertive than ever before.

But whether the majority of these visitors are representative of the community in a political sense is more open to doubt. A selection of those groups meeting in County Hall over a couple of weekends this spring gives the flavour: Women's Media Action Group, AEUW Broad Left, Lawyers for Nuclear Disarmament, Black Trade Unionist Solidarity Movement, Labour Steering Committee against the Witch Hunt.

With the new political style comes a new language, studiously non-sexist and based on a political ideology that comes jumping out at the most unexpected moments. A recent proposal to fund a cooperatively run laundrette was justified on the ground that it represented the "socialization of washing as a form of domestic production".

It helps to know the language if you want a grant. The GLC's handout has provoked a deluge of applications, and an extra £1.25m is being spent this year simply on staff to process them. Your chances of getting some money are enhanced if you use words like "campaign" or "protest" or "mobilizing the community". "Struggle" may hit the jackpot. And although grants are not supposed to be given to groups

promoting a political party, a generous use of the word "socialist" is recommended - and permitted on the grounds that the Labour Party is not a true socialist party!

"I take pictures of strikes, demos, pickets, etc" hopefully wrote a photographer applying for a grant from the Arts and Recreation Committee. (She got it). Centres for the unemployed have been told they will not get grants unless they turn their attention from providing advice and recreation to "campaigning". The Police Committee agreed last week to fund three organizers to "coordinate popular expression of views" against the Police Bill. Indeed hostility against the police leads to the strongest language of all. If the struggle against them led to the manufacture of petrol bombs, declared one enthusiast at a GLC-sponsored conference, "then so be it". The chairman of the GLC Police Committee, sitting on the platform, joined the applause.

Every document we receive now has to include a paragraph describing what the implications are for women. For the officers who have responsibilities for drafting papers on bus lanes, waste stations, Thames piers and listed buildings this is clearly a challenging intellectual exercise. The regular report on canal walks always concludes with the reassuring assertion that the proposals have resulted from consultations with "multi racial/sexual community groups". Sometimes a gallant effort boomerangs. The comment in a proposed grant to a rugby club that "Rugby is of course primarily a male sport, but women are always a welcome addition to the rugby scene" was not well received by the committee.

As part of the fight against male attitudes to the oppressed gender class, sexual harassment has now been made a disciplinary offence under the GLC staff code. Defined as (*inter alia*) "unreciprocated leering", it is taken very seriously. When I attempted some feeble witticism against the idea I was reproached for my unsisterly attitude: "Surely, Anne, as a woman

you've suffered . . . I found this unanswerable, on several counts.

The Tories flummoxed against Marxism and make sinister comparisons with Eastern Europe, the one-party state, etc. One can see their political point, but as far as the approach and the style go they are looking in completely the wrong direction. There are far more parallels with the American mayoral system, whereby one person, backed by a party machine, wins control of a city, and can then use its resources for his or her own propaganda and patronage for the next four years.

That Ken Livingstone himself sees it this way is clear. Before the May 1981 Labour victory he was writing in *London Labour Briefing*, the self-styled "organ of communication for the left" of the Labour Party in London, that the aim of winning would be to "use the council machinery as part of a political campaign both against the government and in defence of socialist policies". He has always insisted on the need to appoint officers "committed to our policies". *London Labour Briefing* ran the banner headline after the election, London is Ours, and since then politicians and media alike have conspired to give the impression that Ken Livingstone is "running London", "Chief" and "Supreme".

It is of course a false impression. Most of the services that affect the daily life of London's citizens - housing, policing, education and training, social services, health, road sweeping and rubbish collection, libraries - are run by other authorities, and not by the GLC at all. Maybe the mayoral structure is a more appropriate one for big city government than our present three-tier muddle, but it is not what we have got.

So what will happen to the GLC? However wide the disagreements about what to do with it (and the political parties as well as between them) one thing is obvious: it should either be given clearer statutory functions or abolished. Its present powerlessness makes it an expensive luxury for London.

It seems however to have survived the threat of immediate government action. The Tory Group at County Hall, under a new leader, are talking openly already about the campaign to win in 1985.

The author is SDP councillor for Camden/St Pancras North.



Will the election date be set this weekend? Nicholas Wapshott weighs the chances

Judging omens and juggling options

Every stone has been turned, every rust inspected, every individual tea leaf held up to the light for a clue to the date of the general election. This weekend, speculation comes to a climax as the Prime Minister officially considers the matter for the first time. All evidence, however far-fetched, is taken seriously. When it became known that Roy Jenkins was this weekend due to make a rare appearance in Glasgow, Hillhead, cynics deduced that an election must be a certainty.

Another entrait being given particularly careful perusal by students of the constitution at the moment is the timing of the Cardiff North-west by-election. By the rule laid down by the late Speaker, Selwyn Lloyd, in 1973, the writ must be issued within three months of the vacancy arising, which is next Tuesday.

Two weeks ago, John Biffen headed the matter over to the Speaker, who, in any case, should announce on Tuesday that the by-election shall be held on June 9. What chance, then, of the Prime Minister announcing an election on June 16 or 23, sweeping up the by-election in her wake? Would anyone complain? Would the pair of premier parliamentarians, Michael Foot and Enoch Powell, cry "Gerrymander"? It would be only a small embarrassment, but in general elections, things can get out of proportion very easily.

One way of avoiding such a wrangle would be to announce a general election before the Speaker announces the by-election.

By Monday or Tuesday next, the Prime Minister will in any case be well-equipped to make up her mind. Despite her protestations that she has been thinking about everything except the date of the election, by Sunday night she can no longer give that excuse. She will leave Downing Street tonight, heading for Chequers and perhaps the most significant weekend of her political life. By her own admission, a second term is essential for her transformation of Britain. So far she has just been building the foundations.

Today the full local election results will provide the biggest test

yet of public opinion on which she can base her decision. Tomorrow, in Central Office in Smith Square, the results will be fed into a sparkling new £750,000 computer, an ICL ME29, donated anonymously by an admirer. It will take the figures and apply them to the new parliamentary boundaries, giving an accurate projection of how the country would vote in a general election. The verdict will be rushed to Chequers for her perusal.

Meanwhile, this lunchtime, at the education centre of the General Municipal, Boilermakers and Allied Trades Union in Woodstock College, near Kingston-upon-Thames, there will be a grand council of war of the Labour movement. Labour's Shadow Cabinet, national executive and most trade union leaders, under the umbrella of Trade Unions for a Labour Victory - a coalition of all major trade unions except the National Union of Mineworkers - will sit down for two days of election planning.

The Woodstock pow-wow was originally convened after the Labour debacle at Bermondsey, when trade unions panicked at the prospect of another five years of Norman Tebbit, who has promised to reduce their powers drastically if granted a second term. Though originally convened by Moss Evans, of the Transport and General Workers' Union, to bolster Michael Foot's leadership it was thought after Bermondsey that any meeting which brought the leaders of the Labour movement together might result in eliciting the infamous "sick note" which would allow Mr Foot to stand down in favour of Denis Healey.

The Labour victory at Darlington and the arrival of general election fever has changed all that. Now, instead of talking about the leadership and policy differences, the union leaders are eager to discuss the nuts and bolts of the campaign, in particular, drafting their members into the key marginals and, above all, passing around the hat.

Only if Mrs Thatcher declares an election today will they, momentarily, consider - doing what the Australian Labour Party did, switching leaders at the beginning of an election campaign, which is known

as the "Bob Hawke option". Apart from those in the Shadow Cabinet corridor in the Commons, few today dream about this possibility. The time to ditch Mr Foot has passed.

The wheeler-dealers of Woodstock will also be receiving the latest intelligence about the local election results, provided by David Cowling, Labour's psephological one-man band. It is likely to provide a chastening douche for the Labour Party officials, who are inexplicably optimistic about the party's chances of an overall majority. As our Labour Editor reports today, the unions are more realistic and see themselves taking part in a rescue job. Either way, come the end of the planning on Saturday, the brothers will be presenting themselves as a united, happy band, if a little light in their wallets.

On Sunday morning, while Michael Foot takes his dog, Dizzy, for his constitutional around Hampstead Heath, the quiet of Chequers will be disturbed by the arrival of the BBC *World This Weekend* team, come to ask a few awkward questions. Try as Gordon Clough may, he is unlikely to yank the sword from the stone. When the recording is run at lunchtime, the message will still be wait-and-see. The PM has let it be known that she will announce no news on Saturday or Sunday.

After lunch at Chequers, however, while Michael Foot addresses Clive Jenkins's union at Bournemouth, she will sit down with her three wise men: Geoffrey Howe, in charge of the manifesto, Cecil Parkinson, head of the party machine, and Willie Whitelaw, her trusted deputy. They will consider the date of the election for the first time. From then on, all four must keep poker faces lest the secret get out.

The Conservatives are ready to go. Their newspaper ads are running, their poster sites are booked, their coffers are overflowing. The manifesto is all but complete. Only the change in the home rating system is undecided.

An announcement one way or another about the election is

therefore likely from Downing Street on Monday or Tuesday. On Tuesdays, by chance, the Prime Minister has her weekly meeting with the Queen, so what better time to ask for a dissolution?

Which brings us to the date. If she calls it all off, circle some time in October. However, if she announces one on Monday or Tuesday, it depends how long she wants the campaign to run. With such a clear lead in the opinion polls, it would be rash to allow it to last any longer than the bare minimum, which would make it June 9. To fix the date a week or two later would be a confident decision, defying precedent. In June 1970, when the trip-drip-drip of an unappealing Opposition under juggling away on one theme got through to the electorate in the last few days.

The Labour Party, so far waging a surrogate campaign against the Tories through CND, will be bringing out its secret weapon: the fear of unemployment. A long campaign could see the Tory lead slip away as the Labour movement spoke, for once, with one voice.

So, what of June 9? There would then be a problem about Mrs Thatcher attending two important summits, at Williamsburg, from May 28 to 30, and at Stuttgart, on June 6 and 7. As both would fall in an election week, she would be reminded of an awkward precedent, set in 1945 by Winston Churchill who took Attlee with him to Potsdam, in his words: "in case anyone says 'Why are you committing yourself to something for which you have no authority and when in the ballot box there may be something which strips you of your authority?'". Nevertheless, she has told President Reagan she will attend Williamsburg, which takes place over the spring bank holiday weekend - not a heavy electioneering period.

And the week of June 9 includes the state visit of the President of Sri Lanka. Both Margaret Thatcher and Michael Foot will be invited to the state banquet on Tuesday, June 7, and the Palace has let it be known that no excuses will be accepted even for a general election. And so the waiting goes on.

David Watt

Heading for a fall at the summit?

Having mercifully been pre-occupied with other subjects, I must be the only commentator in the land who has not written in the last three weeks about the date of the election. I do not propose to start now. I have not changed the view I expressed just several months ago that Mrs Thatcher would be wise to go in June but being the person she is, she may still decide to soldier on. Meanwhile the subject has become a howling bore and the Prime Minister has made a mistake in allowing some of the boredom to rub off on herself.

There is however one small sidestream in this torrent of speculation that remains genuinely intriguing, and that concerns the Williamsburg Summit meeting. As all the world now knows, this international circus runs in Virginia from May 28 to 30 and it is certain that Mrs Thatcher has been advised that she will receive a big electoral boost from being seen striding (or as hostile commentators prefer to put it "strutting") the world stage there on equal terms with Ronald, Francois, Helmut and the others. The conventional wisdom appears to have absorbed this notion without the slightest difficulty and yet the underlying assumptions seem well worth examining.

The first is that being "Prime Ministerial" puts you decisively ahead of your main opponents in an election beauty contest. The idea is that Michael Foot and David Steel, who have never been to a summit (though Roy Jenkins, as President of the European Commission, has) will be exposed as mere politicians - and untried politicians at that - whose electoral twittering is a temporary distraction from the work of real statesmen like the Prime Minister. All Mrs Thatcher has to do is be allowed to get back to the inspiring work of saving the world.

It is a pretty conceit, but life, unfortunately, is not as simple as that. Once the election begins, experience shows that the Prime Ministerial patina is lost almost immediately in the rough, and tumble of day-to-day campaigning - so much so indeed that far from a campaign appearing to the great British public to be a sordid interlude in the midst of a world crisis, the world crisis will probably be seen in these islands as a tiresome irrelevance to what is going on at the hustings. It already is, for that matter.

What about the second assumption, though - it is a great thing to be seen at the international summit? This, of course, is a notion that no British politician bothered about until 25 years ago. Disraeli, Lloyd George, Churchill or even Attlee knew exactly where they would be sitting. It was only with Macmillan, Home and Wilson that the doubt about our international status began to creep in and a national obsession on the subject took over. Now that it has done so, there is no doubt that not being at the summit would involve severe loss of face to Mrs Thatcher as well as hurt national pride, and to this extent the conventional wisdom is right.

The Prime Minister has got to go to Williamsburg. But the positive additional bonus that will accrue from being seen there will depend less on the existence of the summit club and Mrs Thatcher's membership of it than on what people think of the other members. At present the leaders of the West look a pretty lacklustre bunch. It is one thing to hobnob with Stalin and Roosevelt (let us forget about Chiang Kai-shek for a moment or even Eisenhower, de Gaulle and Khrushchev). It is

quite another to be lined up for a group photograph alongside Henry Kissinger and Mr Nakasone.

This brings us to the third and most important assumption that people are making about the public relations of the summit: *what matters is that the meeting should take place, not what happens at it.* This, which one might call the "Field of Cloth of Gold" syndrome, proceeds from the idea that all summits are primarily international theatre. Nothing, it is said, can be seriously achieved between the principals in two days of polite, desultory chat. If there is agreement at all it will have been reached at official level beforehand and will require only to be given a historic stamp of approval at the summit meeting itself.

There is some truth in this. The western economic summits have had a symbolic value since their inception in 1975, signifying the determination of western governments to maintain and control a stable and reasonably open international economic system in spite of the recession and in spite of all shocks. Where they have succeeded in doing something dramatic as, for instance, in the case of the Bonn Summit in 1978 (which sealed the bargain whereby President Carter undertook to decontrol the American oil market in return for German reflation) most of the spadework has usually been done already. But there is more to it than that.

For one thing the reality of the summit dialogue - though less than it could be if the meetings were differently arranged - is still valuable. Attitudes and sometimes even decisions can be changed. But that is another, long story. What matters in the context of public politics is that there is a difference between good and bad theatre. Between tragedy, comedy, farce, and Grand Guignol. And it is by no means clear that all are equally popular with the groundlings. The last summit, at Versailles, for example, was a tragedy-comedy in which President Reagan and President Mitterrand talked with great animation and, it turned out subsequently, with total lack of communication. The immediate effect was not particularly exciting. The long-term reaction was deplorable.

At Williamsburg there are not the makings of a great flop - but there is no premonition of a great hit either. No concrete agreement is yet in sight on a grand strategy for the international monetary system; there is not even much prospect of a replacement of IDA and the World Bank's soft loan fund. On trade in general we shall at best get some worthy declarations of allegiance to an open system (reinforced with a few dark forebodings of a Third World financial crisis unless everyone lends a helping hand) and on East-West trade a sour agreement to disagree. There will be a lot of whoopeeing about world recovery now being in full swing, but who, after so many false dawns, is really ready to believe it?

There are not many votes in all this for Mrs Thatcher. In fact she could even come away from the gathering a net loser if, as is quite possible, she gets cast as pig-in-the-middle between the Germans and the Americans in the atrocious ship of it than on what people think of the other members. At present the leaders of the West look a pretty lacklustre bunch. It is one thing to hobnob with Stalin and Roosevelt (let us forget about Chiang Kai-shek for a moment or even Eisenhower, de Gaulle and Khrushchev). It is

Philip Howard

A grenadier on a hill-top high

Some talk of Exeter Cathedral, and some of the town of Exeter. Beverly for miseries, Southwell Minister for carved leaves with little animals hiding in them, Salisbury for its spire. Earth has not anything to show more fair than the crown of Ely riding over the Fens like a great sailing-ship - except, perhaps, Durham towering on its hill.

But of all our great buildings, there is none that can compare, and in the childish game of top ten cathedrals comes number one with such certitude, as Lincoln. One would not want to be patronizing to the Lincoln Cathedral, because the quarrelsome old fellow might knock one down, but he hit the nail on the head in *Rural Rides* when he observed that, "Lincoln Cathedral is, I believe, the finest building in the whole world." It still is, 153 Aprils later. Here are some further observations on the matter, arranged philosophically.

1. The Lincoln Imp, turned to stone for misbehaving in the Angel Choir, is a sad disappointment, discernible with difficulty; did not a patch on his cousin on the West Front.

1.1 They keep their cathedral and Minster Yard and environs so beautifully at Lincoln by making it awkward for tourists to get in without paying at least 50p. Most of us gladly gave more. St Paul's please copy.

1.2 This may be a symptom of northern pride compared with the slovenliness of the south. For the Earl of Ancaster's memorial service, everybody was turned out for a grand county ceremony, black stockings for the women, black jowlers for the men, everything decent and in order to do honour to the man and the county.

1.3 The pre-eminence of Lincoln is partly a matter of position. You can see it from 30 miles away across the plain illuminated at night. Nat

Hawthorne remarked that being almost the only hill in Lincolnshire the inhabitants seem disposed to make the most of it.

1.31. By an optical illusion and dead ground, as you approach by the road from Nottingham you can see the great rose window above the Bishop's Eye from miles away through the trees and ruins of the Bishop's palace.

1.4. The class distinction between the Above Boys and the Below Boys noted by Eliot in one of his *Essays*, survives up the hill quiet and tasteful tourist shops, down the hill hamburgers and hurly burly crowd scenes.

2. Did you know that the monumental statue of Tennyson by George Frederic Watts, showing the Laureate looking down grumpily at a tiny flower in his hand, is known locally as 'The Disgruntled Cobby'?

2.1. There is a good motto on the former girls' school, now converted to the Art School: "Disse aut discide." Impractical these days, however.

3. Are we quite sure that the point about Lincoln Green was the bright green colour and not the weave? I detect some uncertainty in the sources. Is it possible that Robin Hood and his Merry Men were shocking pink?

3.1. What is a Wong? And if you answer "Two Wongs don't make a White", kindly leave the page. There is a street by the cathedral called Lowes Wong. I'll tell you what a Wong is: it's a piece of unenclosed meadowland, etymology Old English and Old Danish, for we are in the Dane-law up here, my masters.

4. "There is a proverb, part of which is this. They say that Lincoln was, and John Taylor, 'The Water Poet', wrong again, Taylor.

4.1. The cathedral is, I believe, the finest building in the whole world.

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1982/1983

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BRITISH FUNDS

1982/83	High	Low	Share	Price	Change	Yield	Div	Yield
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Bowater Corp, one of the world's largest paper manufacturers, was the toast of the stock market yesterday as the shares shook off recent gloom to end to day 19p higher at 189p.

Earlier this week, more than 1.25 million shares were overhanging the market with foreign buyers as the price drifted to within halting distance of the year's low of 150p. But with those out of the way the buyers returned in force amid rumours of a bid from the United States and hopes of a big rise in the price of newsprint there.

Last night, the company was quick to dispel rumours of a bid. "There is no truth in it whatsoever," said Mr Dennis Rees at Bowater. Segments, the world's biggest distillers, also denied it in New York that was interested in making a bid.

But Bowater did admit that it was ready to follow the lead of America's big two newsprint producers Kimberly Clark and Consolidated Bathurst, which have raised their prices from \$468 a tonne to \$500 a tonne. "We will be in there with the rest of them," Mr Rees added.

On full production, Bowater

handles 900,000 tonnes of newsprint a year and last year more than \$80 per cent of its profits were earned in the United States. Last night, analysts were running the slide rules over Bowater to assess whether the company was due for a re-rating.

The surge in the Bowater

American investors were quick of the mark in Thomas Tilling yesterday after the thumbs-up from the OTC on BTR's £500m bid. But dealers are discounting the prospect of a counter bid from across the water and reckon the arbitrage can make more than enough by just dealing in the shares.

price was mainly responsible for the rise in the FT index, which ended the day 5.2 up at 695.0.

Gilt recovered from a hesitant start replacing falls of 1/4 with rises of a similar amount, despite the pound's loss of 0.1 cent to \$1.5790 on

Good news for Bowater

ACCOUNT DAY: Dealings began, April 25. Dealings end, May 8. Contango Day, May 9. Settlement Day, May 16.

the foreign exchange. But yesterday's tender for the new "top" £10m of Treasury bills linked conversion of 2.5 per cent proved a flop. The Bank of England said that only about half of the stock had been applied for and that all applicants had been allowed in full at 97.50. As a result, dealers were uncertain of how this novel issue would perform in the market when dealings start.

On the bid front, shares of Percy Bilton, the property and construction group, slipped 8p to 270p after Trust Securities £104m bid lapsed. Trust received less than 1 per cent of the acceptances.

Mr Peter Dellar, former chairman of St Georges Laundry before it was taken over by Spring Grove, still had his admirers. Yesterday, a band of them grouped together and bought 1.7 million shares in Charles Baynes through brokers Charlton Seal Dimmock.

amounting to 24.2 per cent of the equity. Mr Dellar earlier this week bought a 30 per cent stake in Baynes, Britain's biggest back-saw manufacturers, and his followers must be hoping he can do a similar job for then at Baynes as he did at St Georges. Baynes closed 9p up at 59p.

After a nervous shakeout this week shares of Mr Paul Bristol's RCA International rallied yesterday to close 2p up on the day at 47p compared with the year's low of 45p. Hopes are high that Mr Bristol may now be putting the finishing touches to his proposed bid for the group's non-oil interests.

Forward Technology lost ground on news of increased losses and a cut in the dividend. Despite an increase in turnover from £42m to £44m pre-tax, losses have grown from £691,000 to £997,000. Shareholders must also go without

their dividend. Last year they received 3p. Prospects for the first quarter were described as encouraging.

Oil shares recovered from a nervous opening after report from Japan that Iran was offering a discount on Opec prices and putting the fragile price agreement in jeopardy. The reports were denied and prices recovered most of their earlier falls. BP ended 2p higher at 398p, after 388p. Shell a similar figure at 490p, after 480p, but Lamsco lost 10p at 308p.

Among the Australian mining shares, Samanthan rose 2 cents to 80 cents after a visit to London by Mr David Muller, Chairman to meet City institutions. Mr Muller said Samanthan had discovered encouraging prospects in Kalgoorlie, Western Australia. Samanthan and its associate Samson own around 70 per cent of the venture.

Shares of the hotel giant Trusthouse Forte fell 3p to 182p on yesterday's report in The Times from America that it was embarking on a massive expansion programme, including the opening of 14 new hotels. THF denied the report.

Sterlings: Spot and Forward

Market rates	1 month	3 months	6 months	12 months
New York	1.5790-1.5795	1.5790-1.5795	1.5790-1.5795	1.5790-1.5795
London	1.5790-1.5795	1.5790-1.5795	1.5790-1.5795	1.5790-1.5795
Amsterdam	1.5790-1.5795	1.5790-1.5795	1.5790-1.5795	1.5790-1.5795
Frankfurt	1.5790-1.5795	1.5790-1.5795	1.5790-1.5795	1.5790-1.5795
Paris	1.5790-1.5795	1.5790-1.5795	1.5790-1.5795	1.5790-1.5795
Stockholm	1.5790-1.5795	1.5790-1.5795	1.5790-1.5795	1.5790-1.5795
Oslo	1.5790-1.5795	1.5790-1.5795	1.5790-1.5795	1.5790-1.5795
Geneva	1.5790-1.5795	1.5790-1.5795	1.5790-1.5795	1.5790-1.5795
Basel	1.5790-1.5795	1.5790-1.5795	1.5790-1.5795	1.5790-1.5795
Zurich	1.5790-1.5795	1.5790-1.5795	1.5790-1.5795	1.5790-1.5795

Effective exchange rate compared to 1975, was 0.42 down 0.3

Discount rate 10% Low 10%

Overnight 10% Low 10%

Week Fixed 10% Low 10%

Buying Treasury Bills (10%)- Selling

1 month 10% 1 month 10%

2 months 10% 2 months 10%

3 months 10% 3 months 10%

6 months 10% 6 months 10%

12 months 10% 12 months 10%

Local Authority Bonds

1 month 10% 1 month 10%

2 months 10% 2 months 10%

3 months 10% 3 months 10%

6 months 10% 6 months 10%

12 months 10% 12 months 10%

Overnight 10% Low 10%

1 week 10% 1 week 10%

1 month 10% 1 month 10%

3 months 10% 3 months 10%

6 months 10% 6 months 10%

12 months 10% 12 months 10%

Finance House Rate 10%

Other Markets

Markets	122 78	59
	110 78	
1.7970-1.8120	71	51
0.5820-0.5950	78	47
8.40-8.53	145	91
1.72-1.75	20	14
10.79-10.83	248	190
n.e.	254	192
0.4570-0.4600	116	75
3.6150-3.6450	128	70
225-250	108 1/2	78
2.1880-2.3960	380	248
5.4220-5.4820	487	228
3.2850-3.3180	360	145
1.6960-1.7130	380	230
	405	318

Investment and Finance

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THE TIMES

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STOCK EXCHANGES

FT Index 695.0 up 5.2
FT 100 61.98 down 0.02
FT All Shares 430.88 down 2.44
Bargainet 24.240
Times Mail USM Index 170.9 down 0.7
Tokyo Closed
Hongkong Hang Seng Index 987.25 up 0.65
New York Dow Jones Average latest 1215.27 up 2.62

CURRENCIES

LONDON CLOSE
Sterling \$1.5790 down 0.1 cent
Index 84.9 down 0.2
DM 3.85 down 0.02
FF 11.61 down 0.075
Yen 371 down 2.50
Dollars
Index 121.9 down 0.3
DM 2.4410 down 50pts
Gold
\$434.50 up \$2.25
NEW YORK LATEST
Gold \$433.75
Sterling \$1.5790

INTEREST RATES

Domestic rates
Base rates 10
3 month interbank 10 1/4-10
Euro-currency rates
3 month dollar 8 1/4-8 1/2
3 month DM 5 1/4-5 1/2
3 month 15 1/4-14 1/2
ECGD Fixed Rate Sterling
Export Finance Scheme IV
Average reference rate for interest period April 6 to May 3, 1983 inclusive: 10.304 per cent.

PRICE CHANGES

News Int. 223p up 47p
Global N. 24.75 up 75p
Garner Booth 90p up 11p
T. Tilling 214p up 24p
Bower 187p up 17p
H. Ingram 85p up 3p
Johnson Corp 298p down 3p
Leisure Ind. 350p down 16p
Mercantile Hse. 800p down 15p
Seaco 573p down 15p
Satchell 475p down 15p
Ryl Bk. Scotland 122p down 15p

TODAY

Interim Anglo-African
Finance, Transval Cons Land & Exploration
Unialex Ayshire Metal Prods.
Copydex, Evered Higgs, Fleming Far Eastern, Hallam Grp of Nottingham, Northern Goldsmiths, Sava & Prosper Linked
Nv (2nd Int), Scottish Ontario
Co, Stewarts Enterprise,
Tern-Consultants, UEL
Economic Statistics Unemployment (Apr-Prov), Unfilled Vacancies (Apr-Prov), Car & Commercial Vehicle Production (Mar-Final)

Back Thatcher, business urged

Business should give firm backing for Mrs Thatcher in her policies, in the next general election, Mr Walter Goldsmith, director-general of the Institute of Directors, said yesterday. He was speaking at the breakfast offered by Labour and the SDP/Liberal Alliance.

"Mrs Thatcher has broken the mould of British politics by having the courage and tenacity to face the economic crisis which politicians have shirked for decades - to face it and to beat it."

"At one time it was thought that businessmen would flock to the banner of the SDP/Liberal Alliance. Today it is clear that has not happened," he told the institute's Eastern branch at Peterborough.

AGENCY OFFER: The tender offer for sale of shares in Boasse Massimo Pollitt, the advertising agency, was oversubscribed 2.1 times at the striking price of 315p a share, Morgan Grenfell, merchant bankers, said yesterday.

GRANT AID: Grants totaling £238,000, equally funded by the EEC Commission and the Department of Industry, are being made towards the cost of an initial feasibility study for the Disneyland-style theme park called Wonderland which is planned for Corby, Northamptonshire.

TRADING CALL: Many of the world's economic problems would ease with just a small increase in trade, Sir Campbell Fraser, President of the CBI, said yesterday. "Free and fair trade" within and without trading organizations in Europe was the best bet, he said.

BREW UP: Beer production in March was 3.1ba bulk barrels, a 1.7 per cent increase on the same month last year, said the Brewers Society.

SALES RISE: US car sales rose 14.3 per cent last month to 763,188 units from 667,630 a year earlier.

Wall St mixed as blue chips fall

New York (Reuters) — Stock prices turned mixed yesterday, with blue chip prices turning lower.

The Dow Jones industrial average fell 1.35 points at 1211.30 after reaching 1217.49. Volume was about 12 million shares. The Dow Jones transportation index rose 4.68 points to 336.05. On Wednesday the index gained more than 15 points.

The broader market continued to improve, however, with advancing issues outpacing losses by about nine to four. One component of the Dow is Eastman Kodak, which fell 3 1/4 to 76 1/4. Kodak has been the volume leader since reporting disappointing first-quarter profits on Wednesday.

Consolidated Edison was the second most active, unchanged at 22 1/2. Mr. Ralph Ascarelli, of Kidder Peabody said, "We're going to have a correction one of these days, but I don't think we're going to get it here."

Linford bid verdict next week

By Our Financial Staff

The verdict on Linford Holdings takeover bid for food group, Fitch Lovell, is expected from the Monopolies and Mergers Commission next Thursday.

Lord Cockfield, the Trade Secretary, will announce whether the bid should be allowed to proceed and whether Fitch Lovell should be allowed to go ahead with its controversial £35m sale of its Key Markets supermarket chain to Linford.

The early indications are that Lord Cockfield will decide that the Linford bid for Fitch is not against the public interest. However, the decision on the sale of the 106 Key Markets stores to Safeway is the more important of the two.

If Mr Geoffrey Hanks, chief executive of Fitch, is allowed to conclude the Key Markets deal, Linford is unlikely to pursue its takeover ambitions for what would fundamentally be a food manufacturing, rather than a food retailing group.

When Mr Alec Monk, chairman of Linford, launched his £37m takeover bid for Fitch last September, a key element in the proposed deal was the proposed merger of the Key Markets supermarkets with Linford's Gateway stores chain.

But Mr Hanks since taking over as chief executive of Fitch Lovell last October has frustrated Linford's takeover ambitions by agreeing the sale of Key Markets, a chain of 104 West German branch shops in the West Country, and the Fitch poultry business for more than £40m.

In future Fitch will concentrate on food manufacturing, specialist foods and frozen food distribution.

The deals all depend on winning Department of Trade approval and also on an extraordinary meeting of Fitch Lovell shareholders to be held on May 20.

The "search and seize" orders permit solicitors instructed by the Official Receiver to enter any premises of the companies which they have reason to believe are "owned, occupied or under the control of" the defendant companies or their servants, agents or directors.

Last week, the Official Receiver was appointed provisional liquidator of five Hunt companies, including Exchange Securities & Commodities, after the Secretary of State for Trade presented petitions to wind them up in the public interest.

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Richardson sceptical on ambitions for banking and insurance

Bank governor raises doubts over building society expansion plan

By Lorna Bourke

The building societies' expansionary ambitions received a sharp setback yesterday when Lord Richardson, the Governor of the Bank of England, raised doubts about the wisdom of allowing them to compete directly with banks and insurance companies.

In its recent report on the future constitution of building societies, the Building Societies Association called for a wide range of new powers - most notably the freedom to set up or acquire banks, insurance and finance companies.

While accepting the need for some of the reforms, Lord Richardson was sceptical about the more radical proposals. "Acquisition of such subsidiaries would carry wider implications which are perhaps not fully set out in the report. The important point is that the Bank (of England) would require the parent, in the interests of its depositors, to support the subsidiary in case of need, more fully than is required by the law of limited liability."

"No parent which itself took deposits and depended upon a creditworthy name could expect to walk away from a subsidiary in trouble without risking a loss of confidence on the part of its own depositors," he said.

"There must clearly be limits to what any of you can do, especially in the diversification of your assets, while continuing to call yourselves building societies and to retain the public goodwill now attaching to that name," he told delegates at the BSA conference yesterday.

Earlier, Lord Richardson had given the societies considerable encouragement for their proposals in housing finance. "It is not surprising that as specialists in the field societies should wish to innovate in this way and provided that any risks involved are fully appreciated, it would seem appropriate for present legislative curbs in this area to be relaxed."

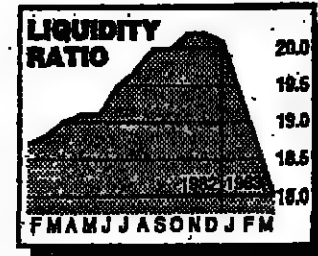
He also said that it was important for the societies to be able to compete for deposits and that the restrictions on unsecured lending were unnecessarily hampering the societies' expansion. "Legislative change allowing societies some flexibility would seem appropriate," he said.

His message to the societies, that they should be wary of throwing away their status as mutual organizations and with it the enormous goodwill they enjoy from the investing public, will find many sympathetic ears both within the building society movement and outside.

"The first question is how to make sure that the pace and direction of change does not undermine the very special confidence that the general public places in you. The particular difficulty is that a rapid and wide-ranging diversification by only a few societies could affect the public image of the whole movement," he said.

Lord Richardson's comments came after a warning this week from Mr Alan Cumming, chairman of the Building Societies Association, that home loan rates may have to rise soon, if bank base rates do not come down.

And the latest edition of the BSA bulletin reveals how hard pressed the societies are, with liquidity falling from its December high of 20.1 per cent to 18 per cent by the end of March.



Lord Richardson (right): need to retain public goodwill

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Exco in £9m unit trust deal

By Jonathan Clare

Exco International, the international moneybroker, has taken control of Gartmore Investment Management, the unit trust group, in a £9m deal with British & Commonwealth Shipping.

GIM will pay in shares for the 50.1 per cent stake it is taking in Exco, but British & Commonwealth will retain a 49.9 per cent holding through its Cayzer, Gartmore subsidiary.

The deal also includes a 42.5 per cent stake to be taken by Exco in a new venture capital company formed by Cayzer, Gartmore and managed by GIM.

The issue of 1.6 million new Exco shares will increase British & Commonwealth's stake in the international moneybroker from about 16 per cent to 18.3 per cent.

But British & Commonwealth's stake in Telestar, the financial information service, where Exco also has a large controlling stake, held by GIM, will be transferred to Cayzer, Gartmore with some other investments before the deal goes through.

GIM controls investment trusts and other investment schemes with total funds of more than £1,200m.

Last year, it made profits of £1.8m and it has net assets worth about £4.4m.

Mr John Gunn, Exco's managing director, said GIM intends to enter the US market under aggressive management to tap investment funds which are rarely placed outside the country.

The 10,000 employees and pensioners who took part in Britain's largest management buyout of the National Freight Corporation fourteen months ago have seen their £1 shares more than treble to £3.20.

The corporation's board is now recommending a second interim dividend of 5p a share for the 24 weeks to March 19, which brings the total dividends paid on each £1 share since the buyout to 22p a share. This means that an employee with the average holding of 700 shares is nearly £1,700 better off on paper at least - than before the £33m buyout of the largest haulage and distribution company in the country was arranged in February 1982.

The corporation's interim figures show that the shareholding employees have every reason to be pleased. Trading turnover is running at about 9 per cent higher than it was in the corresponding pre-buyout period, last year at £257m.

Freight profits for the period stand at £3.9m again ahead of last year, although no corresponding figures are available.

Mr James Watson, the finance director of the corporation, said that the second quarter of the year which

includes Christmas and New Year holidays, is traditionally the weakest trading period. But, he said, the group is performing ahead of a target which itself is significantly higher than that achieved last year.

New contracts have been won from Whitebread, Carreras, Rothman, and Birds Eye and the 300 redundancies announced over the past six months have been balanced by an almost equal number of recruitments to leave the workforce at the pre-buyout level of 24,000.

The board also plans to issue 600,000 new shares this year, which will have the effect of diluting the value of the existing shares by about 4 per cent. This follows a one-for-one share split in April which doubled the number of shares in issue to 15 million and means that original shareholders now own two shares worth £1.60p each, instead of one of the original shares valued at £3.20p.

The basis for allocating the new existing shares will be determined by the NFC board later this month. The allocations will be made on one of the four occasions in the year when trading in the shares takes place.

The problem has been that while profits from transactions by funds in the stock market have been tax exempt, the law on financial futures has been unclear. Pension funds have held back from the London International Financial Futures Market (LIFFE).

Parliamentary question, Mr Brittan said: "I accept the case for a change in the present law to bring the tax treatment of transactions by pension funds in financial futures into line with that of other pension fund investments."

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Boom continues at National Freight

By Andrew Cornelius

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Tax victory for pension funds

By Our Financial Staff

The Government will introduce legislation to exempt pension funds from tax on transactions in financial futures.

Mr Leon Brittan, Chief Secretary to the Treasury, said yesterday.

But the success of the pension funds in pressing their case on this issue may lead to arguments from other commodity markets that similar concessions be granted to dealers in their contracts.

For the moment, however, the Government is firm that the new ruling will be restricted only to pension fund involvement in financial futures.

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Jobs threat blocks bid for Johnson

By Our Financial Staff

The Monopolies and Mergers Commission has again saved Johnson Group Cleaners from takeover by banning two possible bidders from Sunlight Service Group and Initial.

The commission made its unanimous decision mainly on the grounds of competition but also took into account the likely loss of between 200 and 400 jobs.

Sketchley made an approach in 1977 to Johnson but dropped its bid when it was referred to the Monopolies Commission.

Last year, Sunlight mounted a £25m cash and shares bid for Johnson. Soon after, Initial, a subsidiary of BET, said it would bid but without revealing formal terms.

But the commission decided that a takeover by either company would give them a much larger market share in an industry which is already dominated by just six firms. Had Initial acquired Johnson, it

could have achieved a 70 per cent market share in certain areas. A successful takeover by Sunlight would have given it dominance in London.

The aspect of job losses was particularly sensitive because they would be concentrated in the hard-pressed Merseyside area.

The commission's worries centred on the workwear and linen rental sides of the laundry business rather than the dry cleaning side.

It says mergers would result in the loss of a potentially strong competitor. Yesterday, Mr John Crockett, Johnson's chairman, said the defence against the bids had cost almost £300,000 to the end of December with the final figure likely to be higher. Next week, he will go to the United States to explore possible acquisitions which had to be put off ten months ago.

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Woolworth names second top man

By Derek Harris

Commercial Editor

The other half of a key two-man executive team whose job will be to turn round the Woolworth stores chain was announced yesterday - Mr Colin Brown, a 40-year-old Scot who is deputy managing director of Makro Cash and Carry, the United Kingdom subsidiary of one of the world's largest wholesalers.

The recruiting of Mr Richard Harter, operations manager of the Asia superstore chain, was announced last week. Both he

and Mr Brown join Woolworth Holdings board as executive directors and would be in the running for eventual choice of chief executive.

Mr John Beckett, Woolworth Holdings chairman, said yesterday: "Mr Brown will greatly strengthen our team and will play an important role in reviving Woolworth's position in the high street."

Various options are being considered for restructuring the Harter operations manager of the Asia superstore chain. A final decision on the precise role of the two new directors will

depend on these considerations and discussions with them, said Mr Beckett.

Bilton bid failure blamed on trustees

By Jeremy Warner

Trust Securities' £100m bid for Percy Bilton the property company was allowed to lapse yesterday after a tiny acceptance level of only 5,000 shares or under 0.01 per cent of the capital.

Mr Peter Jones, Trust Securities' chairman, yesterday blamed the failure of the bid on the position of some of the Bilton family trustees who account for about 40 per cent of the company's shares.

Mr Jones said: "One trustee in particular refused to meet us or consider our offer which he said would be accepted only over his dead body. This blocked the whole family holding despite the considerable support we got from some other trustees."

"Many shareholders did not accept because they were waiting to see which way the family shareholding went."

Mr Jones also said that his bid had been affected by Bilton's attempt to discredit both himself and his company.

"Bilton never produced an asset valuation and there are some very serious questions that have to be asked," he said.

But a spokesman for S. G. Warburg, Bilton's merchant bank advisors, said: "We certainly were not aware that any of the family trustees were sympathetic to this bid. There is no compulsion on a company to produce an up to date asset valuation."

BTR has found itself an unexpected ally in its bid for Thomas Tilling in the shape of the Office of Fair Trading.

It was on its advice that this enormous conglomerate bid was not referred to the Monopolies and Mergers Commission, seemingly on the ground that the OFT has not been given any firm directions on conglomerate mergers. Also, by implication, it sees no *prima facie* reason for the commission to judge between the relative management abilities of the warring parties.

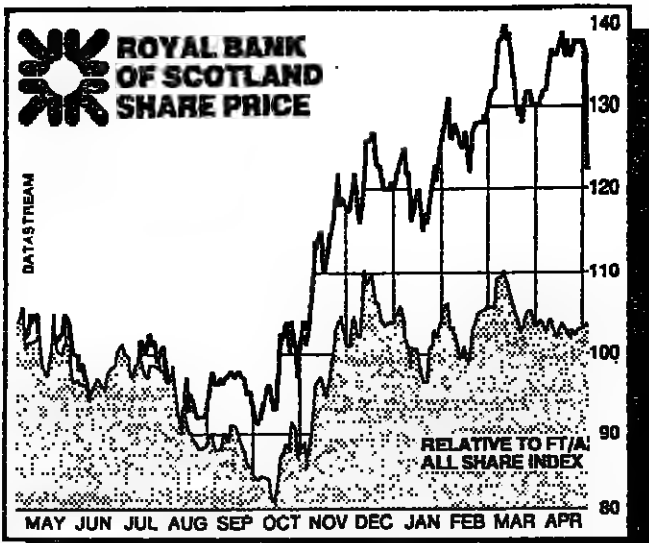
Tilling's defence document, together with the announcement that the bid is not to be referred, pushed the shares up from 189 to 214p yesterday. It is not a straight market battle with "devil take the hindmost" and the present share price is in line with our forecast yesterday that a BTR will win in the end and it will end up paying more than 220p a share.

For investors directly involved, that is obviously the most important issue at stake. In more general terms, one has to question the logic of the official policy on mergers.

After lengthy discussion the Monopolies Commission has decided that the UK cleaning industry should remain cleaner than clean by coming out against a bid from either Sunlight or Initial for Johnson Group.

Just a couple of days ago, Lord Cockfield, Secretary of State for Trade, overruled the OFT recommendation that the Sunlight bid should not be

BTR bid escapes Monopolies scrutiny



referred and, ironically, this £60m bid for a British institution goes to the commission, while a £600m bid for a sizable chunk of British industry goes free.

It does not seem unreasonable to suggest that the biggest-ever takeover bid in Britain should be given the once-over (or rather the twice-over) by someone who is not directly involved, if only to set some ground rules about "conglomerates". That is in spite of the fact that most of our major companies are already conglomerates anyway.

Coming back to Tilling. The only sensible advice that anyone could offer to Tilling shareholders is to stand firm and wait for BTR's reply to their

Royal Bank of Scotland

Royal Bank of Scotland
Pretax profit £30.9m (£43.1m)
Statutory earnings 9.6p (14.5p)
Net interim dividend 3p (2.5p)
Share price 122p, down 15p
Yield 8.1%

Royal Bank of Scotland has followed the hallowed clearing bank tradition of raising the dividend as profits fall. In most

other respects the results are disappointing, with pretax profits down by 28 per cent to £31m and well below expectations.

The rise in bad and doubtful debt provisions is a main reason for this. The group has allowed £24.5m in the latest half compared with £14.2m in the same period a year ago, and £16.6m in the preceding half.

The increase in provisions has been broadly spread between the Scottish bank and Williams & Glyn's and reflects the continuing problems with corporate customers at home and overseas. The bank does not see much sign of the pressure easing on the corporate sector nor of the much talked of economic recovery.

The poor performance from the associate, Lloyds & Scottish, which contributed only £1.2m compared with £6.3m in the same period a year ago, has also depressed group profits.

However, these factors go only part of the way to explaining the drop in profits, which have been inflated by a £4m profit on property sales and £1.1m of profits on the sale of investments.

The group has been hit badly on the domestic side and has suffered from the change in its deposit mix as well as the upsurge in interest rates during its first half.

With current account deposits continuing to decline as a proportion of the sterling base, the group has had to fund a higher proportion of its book

with funds priced at market-related rates.

This alone has squeezed margins and the rise in money market interest rates made matters worse.

One bright spot has been the foreign exchange side which contributed to a good rise in other operating income from £44m to £53m.

However, net interest income has been almost static, still expenses are up by 9.8 per cent and it is also hard to resist the conclusion that the group may have been losing some market share considering the lack of growth in net interest income.

Assuming a lower bad debt charge in the second half, the group could make about £80m for the year compared with £91m.

The new management deserves a decent interval to prove itself but there are still more questions than answers hanging over the group, which accounts for the 15p drop in the share price to 122p.

Sound Diffusion

Sound Diffusion
Year to 31.12.82
Pretax profit £3.25m (£1.58m)
Statutory earnings 6.67p (£3.58p)
Turnover £9.01m (£8.67m)
Net final dividend 0.8894p (0.7245p)
Share price 266p up 4p. Yield 0.47%

The share price of Sound Diffusion, the Hove electronic engineering group, has more

than doubled over the last year.

Outperforming both the electrical index and the market as a whole.

The shares stand on a minuscule yield of under 0.5 per cent and sell at 40 times, hardly-taxed, historic earnings.

The reasons for this rating have started to emerge. Last year pre-tax profits more than doubled to £3.25m and brokers expect them at least to double in the next two years and continue rising.

There has been a big rise in orders, the company said yesterday. New rental business, £850,000 of which was achieved last year, is more than double that of a year ago and the company appears confident of achieving at least £1.7m from this source in 1983.

Although the fancy rating looks justified, the shares could underperform the index over the next year, despite the buoyant outlook and the sweeter of a one-for-two script issue.

Even if it proves only temporary, the abatement in the cross-channel ferry price war is for the moment doing wonders for the profits of European Ferries. Returns from the shipping division rose from a price-war depressed £1.9m in 1981 to £12.8m last year, more than making up for the sharp decline in banking and property profits. The group pretax profit was left £3.2m higher at £30.7m. Half-year profits should benefit from better volumes while property returns will be boosted by some significant sales.

Hawley in £14m rights issue after profit rise

By Michael Clark

Mr Michael Ashcroft, chairman of Hawley the services group, has never been one to miss chances and yesterday he demonstrated this by announcing terms of a £14.4m rights issue - just days after announcing a leap of 86 per cent in pretax profits to a record £5.5m.

The terms are on the basis of one new share for every four held at 146p a share. But news of the cash only served to deflate Hawley's high-riding share price which ended the day at 11p to 167p. The 10.2 million new shares will not rank for the final dividend of 2.2p gross just announced.

Mr Ashcroft said that the rights was needed after the group's recent expansion programme. "This puts the whole group on an even footing. We now have cash in hand everywhere," Mr Ashcroft said.

Hawley hopes to spend £2.5m of the proceeds from the rights on taking up its own entitlement to Electro-Protectives £10m rights issue, which reduces Hawley's grip to just over 50 per cent.

The rest will pay off debts leaving cash in hand of £2m.

Mr Ashcroft has already expressed his desire to make further inroads into the US where Electro-Protectives, Hawley's biggest profits earner, continues to expand and is now the fifth largest security group in the US.

The terms of the rights issue fail to give a profits forecast for the present year after three years of strong growth, which has seen profits jump from £900,000 to this week's figure of £5.5m and assets leap from 48p to 210p.

Mr Ashcroft added: "I don't think we really need any profits forecast. There are enough brokers doing that for us."

Hawley's own brokers Capel-Cure Myers yesterday promptly jumped on the bandwagon easily exceeding earlier estimates from Scrimgeour Kemp Cox, Grenfell & Co. and L. Messel. They are looking for almost doubled profits in the present year of £11.5m.

Since Mr Ashcroft took over at Hawley, the group's trading has grown considerably. As well as the amusement side of the business the group is also involved in double glazing, home improvements, and security. The next move could be to float off provisions on the Unlisted Securities Market.

Dividend up at Caparo

By Victor Feistead

Caparo Industries' pretax profits climbed to £1.21m in 1982, almost trebling the previous year's £419,000, which includes nine months for C.M.T. The net dividend a share is being raised from 1.0p to 1.25p; however, earnings per share are down from 5.28p to 4.63p.

Turnover expanded from £39.12m to £52.41m. The board is confident that further improvement in earnings will allow dividend growth to continue.

Caparo's group composition will change significantly in 1983 with the takeover and restructuring of E. Austin and Sons and the proposed offer for Barton Group.

WALL STREET

	May	May		May	May		May	May
AMP Inc	184	184	Pat Inlet Res	35	35	Poland	215	215
ANA	184	184	Patterson	35	35	Pine	215	215
Alcoa	184	184	Patco	35	35	Pineapple	215	215
Alcoa Chem	184	184	Patco Corp	35	35	Pineapple & C	215	215
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Fears for the future of Western banking 'based on a misunderstanding'

Time to put the Third World debt threat into perspective

Much of the talk of a Third World debt crisis threatening the Western banking system is exaggerated.

It stems from a misunderstanding in both North and South of the consequences of a return to private commercial lending as the main form of capital flow from rich to poor countries.

The expansion of commercial bank lending to the South, from modest beginnings in the mid to late 1960s, has become the main source of external capital for development in the 1970s.

This marks a reversion to the typical 19th and early 20th century source of foreign capital for development - portfolio lending from rich to poor countries.

This commercial market had been closed since their widespread defaults in the 1930s.

These defaults were the result and not the cause of the Great Depression. But the trauma of these defaults coloured post-war views about the desirability of private flows of capital between countries. The Bretton Woods system was regarded by the then US Secretary of the Treasury, Henry Morgenthau as the achievement of his lifelong ambition to "drive... the usurious moneylenders from the temple of international finance".

American banking regulations and the widespread use of exchange controls in Europe - in the UK until 1979 - limited the access of Third World countries to Western capital markets. Foreign aid was invented to provide an alternative form of capital transfer, and until the 1970s, along with direct foreign investment, provided the major source of foreign capital for development.

Long-term debt of non-oil developing countries

	1973	1982
Total external debt	\$37bn	\$605bn
As percentage of output	20	30
As percentage of exports	90	110

Foreign debt as percentage of exports in 1983

Canada	880
South Africa	830
Latin America	520
Australasia	480
Russia	430
India	240
Japan	230
China	220

Sources: IMF and W. A. Lewis: Growth and Fluctuations 1970-1983

Paradoxically, the American banking regulations gave rise to the unregulated, offshore Euro-currency markets in the 1960s. Most of the bank loans to the Third World have been channelled through these markets, based in the 1970s on the massive increase in the Euro-currency deposits of the surplus OPEC countries.

This reopening of the portfolio market - albeit with shorter maturities than was common in the 19th and early 20th century, and with a larger proportion of sovereign (publicly guaranteed) borrowing - has been advantageous for the Third World.

Unlike foreign aid or direct investment, commercial bank borrowing does not require an intimate relationship between borrower and lender, with all the accompanying misunderstandings and the politicization of economics.

But it is precisely for this reason that dirigistes have always cast a jaundiced eye on all "unregulated" private flows of capital.

Two fears are widespread about this Euro-lending. First, that the current level of Third World debt is too high. Secondly, that as a result borrowers may not be able or willing to continue to meet their debt-servicing obligations, and might decide to repudiate their debts, leading to a collapse of the Western banking system.

It would be foolish to argue that international capital markets are perfect or that all commercial lending has been wise. But these fears are exaggerated.

The fears have been fuelled by various statistical ratios

Statistics for 6 major borrowers in private capital market

Country	Output growth 1970-80	Export growth 1970-80	Medium term debt service ratio 1981 (a)	Percent bank debt short-term, 1981	Cash-flow ratio, 1982 (b)
Mexico	5.2	13.4	60	42	129
Brazil	8.4	7.5	58	27	122
Venezuela	5.0	-6.7	37	55	96
Thailand	7.2	11.8	17	55	48
Korea	9.5	23.0	18	53	53
Philippines	6.3	7.0	24	53	81

Source: World Development Report 1982, World Bank and Overseas Development Institute.

Notes: (a) Interest and principal on medium-term debt in relation to exports of goods and services.

(b) Interest and principal on all debt in relation to exports of goods and services.

between the size of the external debt or the costs of its service to the export earnings or gross domestic product, of particular countries, or the group of non-oil developing countries.

But most of these ratios are meaningless. For as long as a borrower can utilize a foreign loan productively to yield a rate of return at least equal to the real interest cost of the borrowing, and can convert the equivalent domestic resources into foreign exchange, the foreign borrowing can pose no problem. Until the past two years of high interest rates, these real interest rates of borrowing were extremely low, and negative in some years.

Secondly, even if the ratios of foreign debt, or debt service charges to exports are taken at their face value, by historical standards they are by no means excessive. The ratio of long term debt to exports of non-oil developing countries of 1.1 in 1982 is well below the lowest ratios of 2.2 for China and Japan in 1913 and a fraction of these for Canada and South Africa. There was little talk of a debt crisis then.

The doubling in real terms of the long term debt of the Third World over the past 10 years merely reflects a readjustment in the borrowing countries to the opportunities presented by the rebirth of the international capital market.

There may be more reason to worry about the inability of Third World countries to increase their export earnings because of the rising tide of protectionism in the West, but it should be noted that, in the 1970s, the major borrowers had no difficulty in increasing their export earnings, or putting the borrowings to productive use, as judged by the growth rates of income.

In the past, the domestic policies of many Third World countries have hindered an expansion of their export earnings, and these have not yet been reformed. But, nevertheless, resisting protectionist pressures in the West is the best means available to help debt servicing.

So far, however, we have been concerned with the long and medium term debt of the Third World. In recent years, some countries - mainly in Latin America - have obtained substantial short term credits from commercial banks.

These are analogous to the overdraft limits which banks offer to their domestic customers. Just as a domestic client would only expect to pay the interest on his overdraft out of current income, repayments of principal on these short term debts are not usually considered to be part of the annual debt

more a sign of the unsoundness of these countries' past borrowings or their future ability to service them than would be the arbitrary withdrawal of an overdraft facility for an otherwise sound commercial business.

If the commercial banks' withdrawal of credit to some of their major borrowers is a belated recognition of the imprudence of some of their past lending, it might require the acceptance of capital losses associated with bad debts which are part of the normal risks of banking, but it would still not justify forcing their debtors into illiquidity.

If, however, it was believed that the consequent threat of default, associated bank failures and their impact on the international banking system would be seen as unacceptable, and would force Western governments to organize a "bail-out" of the commercial banks, their actions during the last few years can be viewed as being rational.

For the commercial debt accumulated by the Third World in the 1970s represents loans made by Opec via the Western commercial banking system. Many are playing on the historical memories of the bank failures during the 1930s. These bank failures, however, were not the cause of the Great Depression - it was the failure

of national governments to prevent the collapse in their domestic money supply.

With most depositors in Western countries implicitly or explicitly insured, and assuming their governments do not allow their domestic money supply to shrink, failures of imprudent banks need not have any of the other dire consequences currently being predicted.

Real cost of Euro-market credit to developing countries

Year	%
1976	2.3
1977	0.6
1978	-1.3
1979	0.1
1980	1.8
1981-82	8.0

Source: Overseas Development Institute, estimates.

In this context, the convergent interests of the imprudent commercial banks, some improvident Third World governments, Opec depositors, and those international agencies which would administer a "bail-out" of the banks, can be seen to lie in both creating and proclaiming a debt crisis which threatens the international economy. But there is little reason for Western taxpayers to accept this special pleading.

Deepak Lal
The author is a reader at the London School of Economics.

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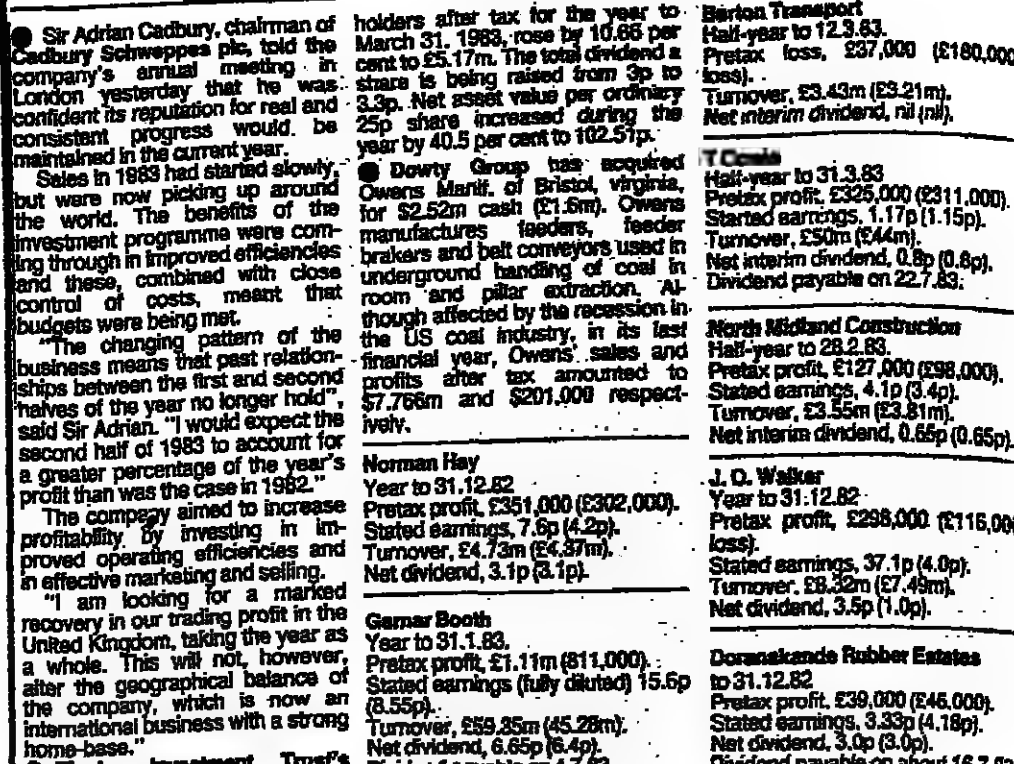
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1982/83	High	Low	Open	Close	YTD	52 Week
142 120	134	134	6.4	4.8	7.8	10.2
158 117	152	152	10.0	6.6	11.7	17.7
74 57	62	62	6.1	9.8	17.7	17.7
46 39	39	39	4.3	14.8	2.5	5.2
326 197	226	226	11.4	2.6	15.7	12.1
145 100	145	145	15.7	10.8	15.7	12.1
270 210	210	210	17.6	8.4	17.6	12.1
86 50	50	50	6.0	12.0	3.3	8.9
97% 77	96	96	8.0	10.5	11.3	11.3
96 75%	94	94	8.7	9.2	10.5	11.3
83 61	62	62	7.1	11.5	3.9	6.2
35 34	34	34	7.3	9.5	9.9	12.2
100 74	77	77	15.7	9.3	15.7	12.2
148 100	148	148	7.3	5.1	4.5	9.4
147 94	147	147	9.6	4.4	16.1	17.9
220 111	150	150	20.0	13.3	1.6	23.8
260 148	150	150	5.7	8.3	9.0	10.8
83 54	69	69	11.4	10.0	5.1	8.3
167 112	26	26	0.46	1.8	4.9	7.0
29 21	26	26	6.4	8.4	4.1	8.5
85 64	265	265	17.1	6.5	4.1	8.5
270 214						

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Chairman Patrick W. McGrath
Balance Sheet reflects continuing strength**

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Outlook. Every effort will be made to avail of all opportunities which we expect to emerge, allowing us to regain past strength and restore growth. We anticipate a better performance in 1983 with hope that continued and concentrated efforts will lead to a more secure and stable period in the mid-1980s.

Financial Highlights	1982 IR£	1981 IR£
Turnover	203,755,000	190,248,000
Profit before taxation	8,493,000	10,359,000
Earnings per share	3.76p	4.10p
Ordinary dividend per share (net)	1.611p	1.611p
Total shareholders' funds	85,286,000	80,443,000

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Industrial notebook

Home truths about coal outlook

It is now a commonplace to comment on the remarkable transformation in industrial relations that has occurred in Britain's coal industry over the last year. It is only 14 months since Mr Scargill, breathing lungfuls of fire and confrontation, took over as leader of the National Union of Mineworkers.

However, what promised to be the *annus mirabilis* of coal field militancy has proved to be very opposite. The pay ballot, Kinnell, Merthyr Tydfil, all bear witness to the triumph of the campaign of compromise and determination being waged by the coal board, with the grateful backing of the Government.

Yet there is another side to the board's activities which has generated less attention than the strikes and pit closures which have dominated the headlines. This is the marketing side of the coal board - and here, too, there has been a noticeable change in emphasis since Mr Norman Siddall, the gruff mining engineer, took over as interim board chairman last year.

Anybody who was at the coal board's annual press conference this week would have been left in no doubt that the coal market is still very much down in the dumps. Demand for coal, despite being widely hailed as the fuel of the future, has fallen from 133 million tonnes in 1973 to a new low of 110 million tonnes in the financial year just ended.

In contrast to the irrepressibly optimistic Lord Ezra, Mr Siddall and his colleagues make no bones about the fact that they face at least five tough years of weak demand. Demand this year may pick up by the odd million tonnes or so, helped it should be said by a ban on CEEG coal imports

and government grants for industrial coal conversion, but the medium term outlook is still bleak.

It is probably arguable whether the collapse of the coal market makes it easier or harder for the board to press ahead with what is (pace Mr Scargill) the necessary and inevitable closure of uneconomic pits. I suspect that it does make a difficult task somewhat less difficult; but what is not in doubt is that presentation is a key part of the equation.

One of the Government's most frequent criticisms of Lord Ezra, a marketing man by profession, was that his regular eulogies of the coal industry's selling coal fitted ill with its apparently sudden conversion, when threatened with industrial action in the pits, to the view that the industry's future was in fact dire.

By contrast the present chairman, whose loyalty to the industry is every bit as strong as his predecessor's, has always struck a less articulate but more convincingly realistic line about the industry's financial prospects.

It will be interesting to see how Mr Ian MacGregor chooses to play this particular aspect of his new responsibilities when he takes over in September. Stung no doubt by the "hatchet man" taunts, his supporters have been making much of the fact that Mr MacGregor is at least as impressive in finding markets for products as he is at shutting down uneconomic or antiquated capacity.

Everybody must hope that this is the case; for the industry's problems are ones of demand and morale as well of high costs.

Jonathan Davis

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Julian Sheffield, Chairman

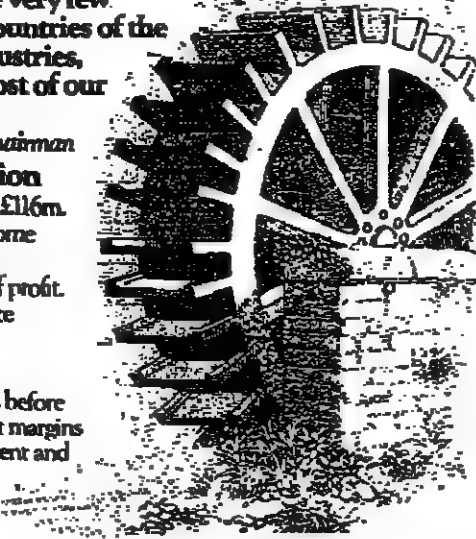
Water Treatment & Engineering Division

Turnover increased 10% from £5.4m. in 1981 to £5.9m. in 1982. Trading profit rose from £5.4m. to £5.7m. Some companies specialising in water treatment produced excellent results and the majority reasonable levels of profit. Our engineering companies lost money. We anticipate considerable profit growth from this division.

Papermaking Division

Sales increased from £40m. to £46m. but profits before tax were similar to 1981. International competition put margins under pressure. However, continuing capital investment and product improvement should enable this division to produce acceptable results in 1983.

Profit before tax attributable to principal activities of the Group	1982	1981
Papermaking	7,687	7,579
Water Treatment and Engineering	5,666	5,392
Property	1,023	940
Holding Company	14,376	13,911
Interest receivable (net)	1,494	322
Unallocated costs	(1,076)	(916)
	14,794	13,317
Earnings per share (basic)	46.00p	67.05p
Ordinary dividend	15.50p	14.00p



Portals Holdings PLC

Water Treatment and Engineering, Bank Note and Security Paper

I report the 1982 figures and accounts are available from The Secretary, London 101, Whitehall Lane, PO 20 2NR

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Highlights from the Statement by Edwin W. Phillips MBE, Chairman of Friends' Provident Life Office.

Worldwide growth

Worldwide annual premiums rose 20% to £31.1m, and new single premiums by 46% to £40.9m. Territorial analysis shows satisfactory progress in almost all areas.

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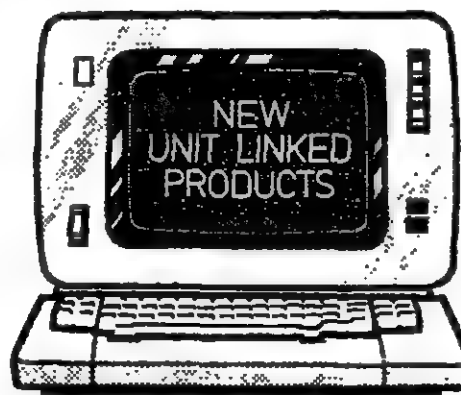


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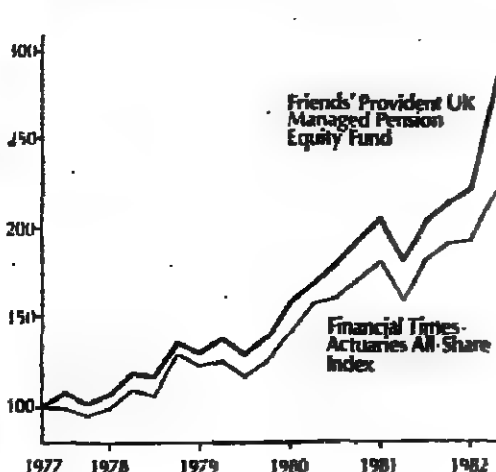
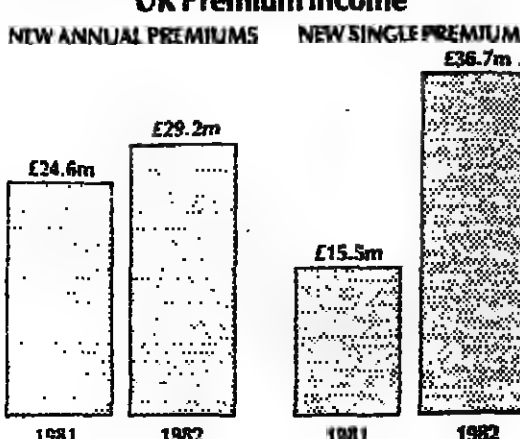
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Law Report May 6 1983 House of Lords

Injury claim against driver's insurers statute-barred

Deerness v John R. Keeble & Son (Brantingham) Ltd and Another

Before Lord Diplock, Lord Edmund-Davies, Lord Keith of Kinkaid, Lord Brandon of Oakbrook and Lord Brightman
(Speeches delivered May 5)

Where a writ in a personal injuries action was issued within the three-year limitation period in section 11 of the Limitation Act 1980 but was not served within that period, and a second writ was then issued outside the limitation period, the plaintiff was not entitled to leave to continue the action under section 33 of the Act because a writ had been issued within the limitation period.

The House of Lords dismissed an appeal by the plaintiff, Miss Lorna Deerness, of Baldoak, Herts, from a judgment of the Court of Appeal (Sir John Donaldson, Master of the Rolls and Lord Justice Dillon) (*The Times*, October 18, 1982) who, allowing an appeal by the defendant, John R. Keeble & Son (Brantingham) Ltd, owners of a motor car, and Miss Caroline Keeble, of Manningtree, Essex, its driver, from a judgment of the Court of Appeal (Sir John Donaldson, Master of the Rolls and Lord Justice Dillon) (*The Times*, October 18, 1982) who, allowing an appeal by the defendant, John R. Keeble & Son (Brantingham) Ltd, owners of a motor car, and Miss Caroline Keeble, of Manningtree, Essex, its driver, from a judgment of the Court of Appeal (Sir John Donaldson, Master of the Rolls and Lord Justice Dillon) (*The Times*, October 18, 1982) who, allowing an appeal by the defendant, John R. 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Britain asked to accept Seveso dioxin

By David Nicholson-Lord

The Italian Government has informally approached Britain to ask whether it could accept the consignment of poisonous dioxin waste from the Seveso chemical disaster which "disappeared" in France last autumn.

The approach was confirmed yesterday by the Foreign Office, which said it was made through the Italian Embassy last week on behalf of representatives of the Lombardy region of Italy, where the explosion took place in 1976.

According to the Foreign Office, the Italians wanted to know which British firms had the capacity to destroy the dioxin. But no formal approach had been made by the Italian Government.

The Foreign Office refused to give details of Britain's response, but referred to two statements by Mr Giles Shaw, the environment minister responsible, in response to parliamentary questions. Mr Shaw described the 41 barrels of waste as "in principle" a most unwelcome import.

He said then that the Government had no trace of the waste having entered Britain. However, his replies were made on April 15 and 26, before the approach through the embassy on April 28.

The disclosure coincided with renewed fears that the waste may still be bound for Britain, in the light of comments made by the Italian minister responsible for the environment in an interview with a Milan newspaper yesterday.

Signor Loris Fortuna, the Socialist Minister for Civil defence, told *Il Giorno* that the Government was looking for ways of disposing of the waste outside Italy and also outside France, because it did not want to spoil relations with France.

He added that Britain might be willing to take the barrels because "they know how to destroy their contents with certainty."

Asked if a precise offer had been made, Signor Fortuna said the British Government had made known to the Italians certain "indications" but was insisting that negotiations should be at an official level. The waste would not be treated like "contraband", he added.

Last night, the Department of the Environment could cast no light on Signor Fortuna's comments, but said that the main British firm which had the capacity to destroy the waste by incineration, Re-Chem in Southampton, had agreed to disclose any commercial approach. It had not yet done so.

The department added that county councils and Customs and Excise were on watch for the dioxin. It was "fairly safe to assume" that notification procedures for toxic wastes had worked and the dioxin had not been legally imported.

However, yesterday's disclosure will be regarded as significant as it appears to indicate that, despite much speculation to the contrary, the highly toxic Seveso waste had still not been disposed of.

Chile cool on requests for RAF landings

By Henry Stanhope, Diplomatic Correspondent

The British Government has twice asked Chile for permission to use its territory as a stopover for aircraft flying to the Falkland Islands, according to Señor Miguel Schweitzer, the Chilean Foreign Minister.

It seems however that the Government in Santiago held out no hope of ending the need for the costly refuelling of RAF aircraft during the flight to and from Port Stanley.

Señor Schweitzer told a news conference in Santiago that his Government preferred to maintain its position of strict neutrality.

Mr Cranley Onslow, Minister of State at the Foreign Office denied making any such request, while in Santiago himself last week.

Meanwhile the Foreign Office last night continued to deny the suggestion that hopes of an early end to the Falklands War were dashed when the Argentine cruiser General Belgrano was torpedoed.

Mr Tam Dalyell, Labour MP for West Lothian, has accused Mrs Thatcher of ordering the sinking in order to "ditch" an agreement with Argentina.

Hever Castle armour suit fetches £1.9m

By Geraldine Norman
Sale Room Correspondent

A superb suit of armour made in Milan at about 1550 for King Henry II of France was sold Sotheby's yesterday for £1,925,000. It fetched the highest bid in a 44m sale of arms from the Hever Castle collection.

From well below £1m there were only two bidders snatching it out. Standing at the side of the room in a plum coloured dress was Barbara Deisroth, Sotheby's Art Nouveau expert in New York, with her ear glued to a telephone. She was relaying bids from a private collector who emerged as the victor.

The competition came from Howard Ricketts, a leading London arms dealer, bidding on behalf of a Continental collector. A boyish figure, dressed in a grey suit, he stood in the centre of the room which was crowded with collectors, dealers and spectators.

He tried to slow down and then speed up the bidding. Then at £1.65m, he drew out a pocket calculator and did a quick sum before recording his last bid.

The price is by far the highest recorded for a suit of armour. The previous high was £418,000 paid at Christie's for a Greenwich armour made in 1613 which was ordered by Prince Henry of Wales.

The armour is richly embellished and chiselled with grotesque masks and scrolling acanthus foliage. Aesthetically and historically it is the most significant armour remaining in private hands.

The sale was devoted to the extraordinary collection of arms and armour formed during a period of about six years by William Waldorf Astor, later Viscount Astor, to complement the little castle he had bought in Kent in 1903. It was at Hever Castle that Anne Boleyn grew up.

All the expensive pieces in yesterday's sale, which have been at Hever since the first decade of the century, will require export licences if they are to leave the country. The Tower Armouries places which would undoubtedly have been refused an export licence, were all bought by Mr Howard Ricketts.



Taking bids for King Henry's armour suit. Photograph: Henry Kerr.

He spent £330,000 on a seventeenth century suit of Flemish armor made for Henry Wriothesley, Earl of Southampton. He is best known today as Shakespeare's patron, but the Earl was also greatly interested in the colonial projects of the day.

The suits of armour were the most expensive feature of the sale compared to previous price levels. But the sale overall earned the present Lord Astor of Hever double the £2m that Sotheby's had been estimating before the auction.

Labour to formalize strategy on marginal seats

Continued from page 1

The function of the whole exercise is designed to channel maximum support from Trade Unions for Labour Victory and other sources of assistance into the seats that Labour Party officials believe can be won. To

a degree, therefore, it serves as a barometer of optimism about the outcome of the election.

Category "B" constituencies are likely to get short shrift by way of outside support for local party efforts to wrest a further 45 seats from the Conservatives and Liberals, including Ber-

mondsey, where the report notes laconically that there is "a Liberal presence".

For Labour to win the election, however, it would require the party to win or retain all 14 prime target constituencies and capture a sizeable chunk of the likely

candidates for success. The fact that Labour's people on the ground do not rate the chances of winning such constituencies sufficiently high to put them in the "A" category list suggests that many rank and file activists believe the election is already lost.

Frank Johnson in the Commons Mr Andropov's cracking form at question time

Mr Yuri Andropov opened his general election campaign yesterday with a sparkling performance at Prime Minister's question time.

He successfully used his famous skills as a communicator to impress both Mr Michael Foot and - rather surprisingly for so prominent an opponent of left-wing extremists - Mr Roy Jenkins. For both made clear their disapproval of Mrs Thatcher's unenthusiastic response to Mr Andropov's new proposals concerning missiles in Europe.

The proposals were timed to ensure a lively start to the press advertising campaign being launched by Mr Andropov's party during the election. But Mr Andropov's election campaign will be confined to Britain rather than extended to his native Soviet Union. Russian voters may rest assured that they will not be inconvenienced by a snap June poll.

The Soviet Government has made it known that, whatever the temptations to cash in on Mr Andropov's commanding lead in the opinion polls, it intends to soldier on until the end of its term of office which, under Soviet electoral law, lasts until eternity. Mr Andropov is one leader who does not intend to cut and run.

By launching his campaign now, Mr Andropov seemed to be in no doubt that Britain would be having a June poll, even though the incumbent whom he was trying to unseat, Mrs Thatcher, had still not announced it. This was another example of Mr Andropov's renowned foresight in psychological calculations. Back home, he shows the same lack of doubt about the actual results of elections. He is the David Butler of Russia, with additional infallibility.

Mrs Thatcher arrived for her question time in a House which was finally exhausted by these days of waiting, but nonetheless impatient at having to endure still more. It was a thin attendance, many members being dispersed around the local hustings. Those who remained were slumped irritably across the open spaces, listening listlessly for the Prime Minister to end it all with a few words.

Mr Richard Mitchell, of the SDP, had the first question. The continued delay provoked

from him an angry outburst. In fact, he was so angry that he had written the outburst down. "Is the right honourable lady aware," he asked, looking at his notes "that her decision to postpone telling this House whether or not there is going to be a general election until after she has had the chance to analyse the local election results shows clearly..." He paused, and further consulted his notes.

In the House, if you are going to say that something is shown clearly, it is always best to say immediately what that something is. Delay can be fatal. Nearly everybody started laughing. Fortunately Mr Mitchell eventually found his place in his outburst.

What it showed clearly, we eventually learned from Mr Mitchell, was that "she is the same as all the rest: a cynical person prepared to put party advantage before the good of the country."

Various Tories in marginal seats inwardly expressed the hope that Mr Mitchell was right. Mrs Thatcher dismissed the charge.

It was shortly afterwards that Mr Andropov made his first surprise gain with an average British floating voter: Mr Jenkins. The leader of the SDP complained that "Mr Andropov's limited but significant step forward appears to have been much more coolly received in London than in Washington or Nato headquarters? Would she be prepared to correct this impression?" Mrs Thatcher was not.

Mr Foot urged her "to consider it afresh." And Mr Cavin Strang, a Labour backbencher, spoke of "a significant Soviet concession." Mrs Thatcher insisted that it was "totally wrong" of the Soviet Union to suggest, as it did in these new proposals, that Britain's deterrent of last resort - our submarine-based nuclear weapons - should be included in talks which left out Russia's comparable weapons.

Mr Andropov was already showing the sort of cracking form which had enabled his party to win every election since 1917. It was good to see the old campaigner bouncing back after his recent setback in the West German poll.

THE TIMES INFORMATION SERVICE

Today's events

Royal engagements

The Queen and The Duke of Edinburgh visit St George's School, Windsor, 3.

The Duke of Edinburgh, Patron and Trustee of The Duke of Edinburgh's Award Scheme, attends a meeting of the Trustees at Buckingham Palace, 11.30.

New exhibitions

The Art of the Print: traditional and modern printmaking techniques. E. M. Flint Gallery, Lichfield Street, Walsall Mon to Fri 10 to 6, Sat 10 to 4.45; (from today until May 28).

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Prize Crossword in The Times tomorrow
CONCISE CROSSWORD PAGE 8

Food prices

Those expecting to enjoy British asparagus during the first week of May will probably be disappointed. The cold, wet weather has delayed the early crop so supplies are short. Prices range from £1.80 to £2.50 a lb. English and French spring cabbage at 15-30p a lb is wonderfully crisp; cauliflowers are 25-40p each, but less for small heads - the flavour is better. Salad ingredients are becoming more plentiful: English celery just coming in at 40-50p a head; superb quality English and Dutch house tomatoes at 55-75p a lb; Italian and French sweetcorn are a good buy at 45-70p a half-pound packet.

Mark's and Spencer's poultry display is hard to beat from posh night just over a pound at £1.05. A lb to large chickens up to seven pounds night ounces at 83p a lb. They also sell boned fresh turkey breast with chestnut stuffing topped with streaky bacon and trussed to look like a large chicken at £1.70 per lb. For casseroles there are packs of ten chicken thighs at 89p a lb. Home-produced lamb is still expensive compared to other meat: Switzerlands are charging 42-50p a whole leg but have New Zealand leg at £1.08 a lb.

Stamp Day

Today is National Stamp Day - the anniversary of the issue of the first postage stamp, the Penny Black in 1840. An exhibition of stamps, including a display of George V high value stamps, known as "sea horses", opens today at the National Postal Museum, King Edward Street, E.C.1. (Mon to Thurs 10 to 4.30, Fri 10 to 4, until June 17).

The pound

	Bank	Bank
	Buy	Sell
Australia \$	1.58	1.60
Canada \$	22.40	22.60
Belgium Fr	79.75	79.75
Denmark Kr	1.99	1.91
Finland Mk	14.26	13.54
France Fr	8.94	8.44
Germany DM	12.05	11.45
Italy Lira	3.99	3.79
Japan Yen	135.00	127.00
Netherlands Gld	11.21	10.63
Spain Ptas	1.27	1.20
Sweden Kr	236.00	225.00
Switzerland Fr	390.00	370.00
USA \$	0.80	0.80
Yugoslavia Dnr	169.00	151.00
	1.93	1.84
	216.50	205.50
	12.27	11.65
	3.36	3.18
	1.63	1.56
	128.00	121.00
	1.27	1.20
	390.00	370.00
	0.80	0.80
	169.00	151.00
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